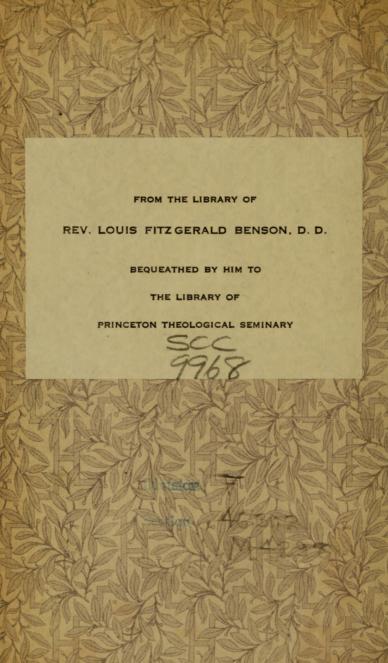
THE POETICAL WORKS W. TIDD MATSON







Lour Forois Willadd Matson



THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

WILLIAM TIDD MATSON,

(BORN 1833.)

NOW FIRST COLLECTED

AND INCLUDING A LARGE NUMBER OF PIECES

NOT BEFORE PUBLISHED.

"Anch' io son pittore,"

Correggio.

TO THE MEMORY OF

THE LATE JOHN MATSON, OF HACKNEY,

TO WHOSE CAREFUL TRAINING AND NOBLE EXAMPLE IN

THE DAYS OF MY CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

I owe

MY REVERENCE FOR ALL THAT IS HOLY,

MY LOVE OF TRUTH, RIGHT AND FREEDOM,

MY HATRED OF FRAUD, OPPRESSION AND WRONG,

AND MY LIFE-LONG FAITH IN THE SACRED CAUSE OF

HUMAN PROGRESS THE WIDE WORLD OVER,

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS GRATEFUL AND ADMIRING SON

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

On the 17th of October, 1893, I passed the limit of , my sixtieth year. At such an age a writer may regard himself as having accomplished all his chief work. It is time that he should collect the fruits of his fancy if the Public are to possess them in enduring form. Hence this volume. Of its contents more than half of the poems have hitherto remained unpublished, as I have been in no hurry to rush them into print. Still other pieces are here for the first time brought together from the pages of long extinct and forgotten periodicals in which they lay scattered and where they originally saw the light. I had intended to include a few unfinished pieces which it is hardly likely I shall now complete, but I find that I cannot do this without swelling out the book to an inconvenient bulk and size. Of these are the First Book in blank verse of the Pleasures of Religion, the Prologue and First Act of a Lyrical Drama on the Story of Fob, Seven Cantos of a Poem in Spenserian Stanza, entitled The Shadowland, interrupted by certain trying experiences that befel me at Sleaford and of which I have never been able to recover the thread, the Introduction and First Canto of a Satirical Poem on Britannia, modelled after the style of Heine's Germany, and some fragments of an ode entitled Christos Pantheos. I have also omitted a blank verse Idvll on the old classic story of Pomona which needs a little revision before I publish it, as I hope one day to do. I had also intended at first, to arrange my poems in chronological order, but on second thought it seemed best for the interest of the General Reader that they should be classified according to form and subject, but I have appended to each the date of the year of composition for the sake of those readers, though fewer in number, who take a psychological interest in tracing the growth and varied developments of the poetic mind. Should the sale of

this volume cover the expense of its publication, I purpose to follow it up with one of like size containing a Selection from my Prose Writings. It was hardly possible but that in a book of this dimension, some errors of typography should creep in. I think, however, that all of these, or at least all of any importance, have been noted and corrected in the subjoined Table of Errata.

Sarisbury Green, Hants, 1894.

WM. TIDD MATSON.

ERRATA.

Page 26-Line 35 for flow read glow.

,, 31— ,, 35 for who read whom.

" 41- " 21 omit comma between had and been.

,, 48— ,, 22 for around read around.

" 267— " 14 for hath read have.

,, 301— ,, 13 for care read car. ,, 386—Note — for ground read aground.

,, 406—Line 24 insert the word all between be and in vain.

,, 430- ,, 20 omit semi-colon after crowd.

,, 565- ,, 14 for He read Have.

", 574— ", 4 for matters read matter.

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

WILLIAM TIDD MATSON,

BORN 1833.

Poems of Romance.

LITTLE MARY.

LITTLE Mary, dream-eyed Mary, Mary with her mother dear Dwelt within a mountain cottage, By the banks of Windermere.

Many a strange and subtle fancy
Oft that little maid beguiled;
Thoughts that are but seldom blended
With the dreamings of the child.

Youthful age sat on her forehead, Clustered round with many a curl; In her blue eyes joyful sadness Floated. Dream-eyed little girl!

Village people, as she passed them, All looked grave and shook the head; But the maiden smiled upon them, Went her way and wonderëd.

The Old Wind, as oft he saw her, Kist her, played with each fair curl, Thought she was a mountain spirit, Not a little wandering girl. But of all her happy rambles,
That which mostly pleased the child,
Was to roam to Stock Ghyll Water,
And to list his music wild.

On the air her song would tremble, Like an arrow's silver stir; There she warbled to the torrent, And the torrent sang to her.

Gazing at the gloom beneath her, She would stand upon the brink Of the dark abyss, and listen To the torrent's voice and think.

Oft her little heart would beat One,—two,—and three against her side; And she clapt her hands, and laught "Ha, ha! I am the torrent's bride!"

Listening then, the more intently, To the hoarse and rugged tone; She would wonder, why the waters Ever thus kept rolling down.

So one summer morning dreaming, Heart wild beating 'gainst her side, Came the Spirit of the Waters, Kist her, claimed her for his bride.

Nevermore within the cottage

By the mere was seen the child;

For the Torrent-Spirit took her,

In her own sweet dream beguiled.

But at midnight, when the rolling Waters murmur wild and hoarse, Then they say two spirits wander 'Mong the rocks of Stock Ghyll Force.

On the air a song comes trembling, Like a little streamlet's stir; And she sings unto the torrent, And the torrent sings to her.

THE TARN IN THE FOREST.

Through the forest at evening The Baron doth ride: But he weens that a spectre Is aye by his side;

For riding or walking,
A twelvemonth hath flown,
And never that shadow
Hath left him alone.

And now by an impulse He cannot control, As though 'twere some demon O'er-mastering his soul,

He rides through the forest To where the black lake Lies darkling, o'ershadowed By crag and by brake.

By the lone pool's dank margin, Where waves the tall reed, And quivers the bulrush, He lights from his steed.

To an oak's gnarled trunk he The bridle makes fast; Then o'er the grim water A wild gaze he cast.

And now the huge beetling
White crag doth he climb,
And stands on the summit,
The scene of his crime.

For there at the trysting,
A twelvemonth agone,
His leman had met him
With heart all his own—

Had met him with blue eye
So trustful and bland,
And thence he had hurled her,
With murderous hand.

Lo! o'er the dark waters,
The pale moon shines down;
A phantom uprises,
A soft voice makes moan,—

"Cold, cold are these waters
Wherein thou hast doomed
The damsel who loved thee
To lie lone entombed;

"But colder and crueller Wait they for thee, As, by spell all resistless, I draw thee to me.

"Come, come! I adjure thee! For oft, with false heart, Thou hast vowed that no power Should hold us apart."

Ha! see how he shudders
And stareth aghast,
He looks on the phantom—
That look was his last.

The spell she had wrought him He cannot resist, As, dizzy and dazed, he His foothold hath mist.

He sinks in the waters
With gurgling groan,
And his good steed is left
In the forest alone.

1881.

A GUERNSEY LEGEND.*

Softly shines the silver moonlight, on the rocks of Vazon Bay,

Where the surges murmur ever to the shore their mystic lay.

^{*} I am indebted, for the prose original of this legend, to a clipping from an old newspaper, in which it was quoted as an extract from Bentley's Miscellany.

'Tis a summer Sabbath even, and a solemn quiet lies On the bosom of the waters, in the azure of the skies.

Homeward from the church returning, with a young heart beating warm,

And her golden-claspëd missal prest against it, like a charm,

Slowly wanders gentle Marie; sad and downcast is her look; Is it o'er the prayers she ponders, written in the holy book?

No! her thoughts are of her lover, who should now be at her side,

Soon, before the Virgin's altar to receive her as his bride.

But of late Pierre was altered, cold and distant, strangely changed,

And she wondered: "Has some other maid from me his heart estranged?"

Thus with jealousy surmising fears, that would not be repelled, All at once she starts and trembles, as her lover she beheld,

In the moonlight, down a rocky path, that opened on the wave, Leading, as tradition fabled, to a syren-haunted cave.

With a feeling of vague terror, curious what were his intent, To her heart she tighter clasped her missal, following as he went.

Till he gained the haunted cavern; quickly, Marie breathed a prayer

To the Virgin's grace to keep her, as she saw him enter there.

But what anguish seized upon her, when within the cave her sight

Rested on her faithless lover, seated in the pale moonlight;

By his side, a lovely syren whom his truant lips caress; Down her lily-shining shoulders floated many an auburn tress;

On her cheeks of matchless beauty, blushing rose with lily strove,

And her eyes of liquid lustre swam with smiles of burning love.

A white robe of gauzy texture round her form was loosely thrown,

And her tender waist was circled by a golden jewelled zone.

In the moonbeams, all around them, countless fairy creatures fleet

Sported gaily, pausing often to pay homage at their feet.

With a heart well nigh to breaking, gentle Marie watched them there,

Till she thought her of her missal, from her lips outbrake a prayer.

"Ave Mary!" cried the maiden—but the words were like a spell,

And the sudden change that followed, passes mortal rhyme to tell.

Changed the form of that fair syren to a sorceress old and grey,

Changed to hideous hags the fairies, and they shrieked and fled away.

And Pierre, now disenchanted, sees alone his Marie's face, As with joy he clasps the maiden to his heart in warm embrace.

Nevermore he sought that cavern 'mong the rocks of Vazon Bay,

Nevermore from gentle Marie did his treacherous fancy stray;

And before another Sabbath moon had risen above the tide, Stood he by the Virgin's altar, with sweet Marie for his bride. 1863.

THE CELT'S LAMENT FOR HIS CHIEFTAIN.

The roar of the rushing torrent is echoing 'mong the lone mountains,

As she sweeps down into the dell where the grave of our chieftain lies:

The voice of the streamlet hath grown to a dirge since she leapt from her fountains.

Far off 'mong the fir-clad heights, that are kissed by the dawning skies.

No more, with a song of gladness, her way through the wilds she pursueth,

But, leaping down over the rocks, she wails like a spirit

in pain;

She remembers the red-handed strife, and the fatal hour she rueth,

When, neath the keen blade of the foeman, our bravehearted hero was slain.

How often his horn in the valley, erst, summoned his clansmen around him,

When forth to the valiant chase we sallied so merry and free!

Alas! for Death, the grim huntsman, on his sable horse riding, hath found him,

And cold in his grave he lies sleeping, where blossoms the

alder tree.

How oft from his rock-built fortress, leading his warriors fiery, He ravaged the lowland plains, while the Saxon fled in dismay!

Like the proud and kingly eagle that darts from its crag-girt

And pounces, at one fell swoop, with his talons down on the prev.

How oft in his bark, at evening, he sailed o'er the placid waters

Of the lake, whilst his lusty rowers to the plash of their oars kept tune

With the song of our clan, and the fairest of all our country's daughters.

His lily-necked bride by his side, sat watching the silver moon!

Ah! woe the hour when the Saxon, with overwhelming numbers,

By stealth through the valley, creeping like a wolf that invades the fold,

Hemmed us in, and the sudden war cry broke rudely upon our slumbers!

My curse on the felon who led them, and his chief betrayed and sold!

But short and sharp was the contest, and many a foe fell bleeding,

And, had we but equally striven, not one had e'er seen the

morn;

The battle was ours—but, alas! of victory, we never heeding, Mourned over our fallen chieftain, while his wraith to the shades was borne.

Ah! who shall comfort now the lily-necked bride, who weepeth

And moans like a dove forsaken, day and night, and

night and day;

And haunts, like a wraith, the green barrow where pallid her warrior sleepeth,

Beseeching his bodiless phantom to come and bear her

away?

Roar down, thou rushing torrent, o'er the rocks, through the valley sweeping,

And wail out thy sobbing dirges where the valiant chieftain

lies low!

Ah! would that thy voice might awake him, where, wrapt in his shroud, he is sleeping

To rise up and lead us to battle, and take revenge on the foe!

1873.

THE BALLAD OF DOLBADARN.

No winds disturb the summer night, No clouds the stars obscure, Which in the mere reflected shine, As in a mirror pure.

The moon, a rain of silver beams Upon the waters, showers, And lightens up the haughty crest Of old Dolbadarn's towers,

But lo! as sounds the midnight chime,
A bark puts off from shore;
It bears Dolbadarn's youthful chief
And his retainers four.

Now whither do his oarsmen row Their chieftain o'er the lake? And wherefore at the midnight hour? 'Tis for a maiden's sake.

For he, from yon far-gleaming cot, By stealth, this night will bear, To dwell within Dolbadarn's walls, Her who awaits him there.

All tremulous with guilty fear,
Lest those within should wake,
She waits, beneath the cottage porch,
Her lover o'er the lake.

But hark! as midway, o'er the mere, The boat her course hath gained, What music rises on the air, So sweetly sadly plained?

And, right before their prow, what form, Amid the moonshine clear, That silvers o'er her flowing locks, Is this that doth appear?

It is the syren of the Mere, So cruel and so fair, Who sings the plaintive song that brings The boatman's wild despair.

For never on that lake at night,
Did bark which mortals bore,
Who on her gazed or heard her voice,
E'er touch again the shore.

Dolbadarn's chieftain turns the helm, "Row for your lives," he cried; They toil and strain, but all in vain, For she is at their side.

And down the fated boat she drags, Beneath the shining mere;— Ah, waiting one! Dolbadarn's lord To thee will ne'er appear.

The cruel Phantom of the Mere
Hath claimed him for her own;
And thou fond fledgling, in thy nest,
Abidest, still unflown.

EDDERLINE.

Cold on thy couch thou liest, And thou no more repliest,

With glances calm and lustrous, to words and looks of mine;
As some bright star of even

Fades from the face of heaven,

When morning comes, so hast thou passed, my life's star, Edderline!

Thy morning hath arisen; But me dark shades imprison;

The night of grief around me throws its coils of dismal twine;

Thy bridal song is ringing,

Where the angel bands are singing;
But the echoes all are silent to my sorrow, Edderline!

Ah! why, when death came to thee, Even as a bride to woo thee, So cruelly enamoured of that dear form of thine, Why did'st thou leave thy lover?

And fold thee from him in my warm embrace, my Edderline?

The flowers upon the mountains, And by the laughing fountains,

And overhanging from their banks the waters crystaline,

Bloom gaily; but my bosom Mourns o'er the tender blossom

Of love's frail plant, crushed hapless in the bud, my Edderline.

The birds their loves are telling, Hid in their leafy dwelling,

The stock-dove woos his happy mate in the tall shadowing

For me, bereft and lonely,

No carol wakes; I only

Can utter forth the anguishing lament, my Edderline!

The honey-suckles clamber, With clusters white and amber,

And to the bacchanalian bees hold out their cups of wine, Around the lattice creeping;

But I, alas! am keeping

A festival of tears by thy dead form, my Edderline!

Can death know no relenting, Nor hear my wild lamenting,

And steer again his bark this way, nor leave me here to pine,
With woe all unavailing?

Ah, would I now were sailing,

With him o'er his mysterious deeps, to meet thee, Edderline!

Shall I rejoin thee ever? For voices o'er the river,

But dimly, indistinctly heard, come whispering things divine,

Of some far-distant meeting, When with eternal greeting,

Our spirits shall embrace in love immortal, Edderline!

THE PILGRIM OF THE AGES.

For ever, wearily I wander on,
And bear the groaning burden of my life;
The seasons pass, and bring to youth and maid
The ripe fruition of their dear desire;
The years still chase each other, and lead down
Earth's toiling kindreds to the quiet grave;
Cruel alone to me, Time brings no touch
Of quiet, and no rest in weariness;
The ancient curse is on me, like a spell,
And all in vain is my desire to die.

"For ever, henceforth, thou until I come,
To rest shalt be a stranger,"—so he said,
The patient Galilean, as He stood,
Bending beneath the burden of His cross,
Beside the threshold of my home and begged
To rest awhile His limbs upon the bench
Within my cottage porch—I cried—"Begone,
And find Thee rest elsewhere!" Ah, cruel speech
That might I but recal, a myriad lives
Were freely given, so myriad lives were mine.
Oh! never, from the light of those calm eyes
Can my worn spirit hide herself, they still
Do haunt me with rebukes that I must bear,
As wearily I wander till the End.

For ever reft of rest, ah, woe is me! Ye clear-set stars, that glitter overhead, Let me the secret of your patience learn! And we white waves that wash the humid strand. Nor ever tire of your dull monotone, Oh! murmur unto me, how I may share Though but a moment your tranquility! I can but envy things inanimate, That never chafe and fret at Destiny, While I must struggle 'gainst the force of doom Which urges onward my reluctant steps. Fain would my heart a little while repose In hope and prayer, kind rests to none denied, Denied to me; for what can Hope presage, Confronted by the irrevocable curse? And say, what boon can Prayer expect of Him, Whose word, once passed, pursues me to the end?

For ever joyously the matin larks Fill all the chambers of the Dawn with song; The wild bees wanton in the noontide air. And in the warm, still hours of summer eve The passionate nightingales prolong their lays. For ever, from their fountains mong the hills, The sparkling torrents foam; while o'er the plains The rivulets softly murmur as they flow. For ever the green forests wave abroad Their mighty arms, and in among the dells, The gay flowers blossom with returning Spring; And still for ever o'er the mounded heaps, Where sleep the mouldering dead, the grasses wave, Till Time, that levels all things, levels them, And of their place no lingering trace remains. But all sweet sounds, sweet scenes, sweet memories. That once had power to charm my heart, have ceased To charm me now; Beauty, light, melody, The changing landscape and the glowing sky, Weary my soul as nights and days drag on, And with a restless yearning unappeased, Impatiently my heart awaits the End.

Will the end never come? Why tarry ye, Great thunder-wheels of doom? And why delay, Thou mighty angel, unto whom its given O'er all the worlds to sound the trumpet-blast, Whose peal shall paralyse the wings of Time? Awake, thou morn of dread to men, thou morn Of joy to me and let me face the Judge! That I may hear His voice again, perchance, No more severe, that I may meet the glance Of His calm searching eyes, perchance no more, To freeze me with rebuke. For who can tell? I may find grace, and Immortality, No longer then, as now, be found a curse.

1863.

THE BRIDE OF ATHENRAY.

LORD Athenray hath ridden down
The staring streets of Hamel Town,
Across the bridge to yonder tower,
Which, guarding fair Evelina's bower,
O'erlooks the murmuring tide;

The loveliest lady in the land,
He rides to clasp her by the hand,
And lead her forth, in bridal dress,
To crown his life with happiness,—
He goes to fetch his bride.

A swifter horseman rode before, And lighted at the lady's door. A guest unbidden entered there, And softly climbed the winding stair

To where Evelina lay;—
Lay dreaming many a happy dream;
He kissed her there, but neither scream
Nor start she gave; the stranger Death
But touched her lips and stole her breath,
The bride of Athenray!

Lord Athenray hath reached the hall—A silence like a deadly pall
Had fallen, where he looked to see
Nothing but glad festivity.

"Tell me," the baron said, Enquiring of the menials near, The while his heart with sudden fear Misgave—"My lady, is she well?" Came sad as tolls a funeral bell

The answer-" She is dead!"

They led him gently to her room, The curtains shed a twilight gloom About the bed, where motionless, Cold to his anguishing caress,

Lovely in death she lay.
The rose still tinged her features fair,
But, ah! the soul was wanting there,
Listening to strains of marriage song,
Amid Heaven's jubiletic throng,

The bride of Athenray!

1864.

THE FARRIER'S DAUGHTER.

The cottage overlooks the stream,

Built on the marge of Ulna Water;

There, as I oared my boat along,

Beneath the pallid moonlight gleam,

I heard the music of her song,

The Farrier's lovely daughter.

It echoed sweetly on the night,
A murmur like to falling water;
And leaning on the window sill,
I marked her there, in truth, a sight
To make a very hermit thrill,
The Farrier's lovely daughter.

I rested on my oars and heard
Her song come mellowed o'er the water;
For silenced was the forge's noise,
And scarce a breeze the ripples stirred;
The air was hushed to list her voice,
The Farrier's lovely daughter.

It was a low and plaintive strain,

The touching song of "Ulna Water,"
Of two that sleep beneath the stream,
In drownëd rest two lovers lain.
She sung like one in waking dream,
The Farrier's lovely daughter.

What was it wrought upon my mind?

The twilight calmness of the water,
The absence of all jarring sound,

The legend-song, these all combined To make for me, a charm around The Farrier's lovely daughter.

She ceased, and cast one other look
Upon the moonbeam-lighted water,
Then shut the curtained casement to.
Away, like one that leaves a book
Half-read, I urged my boat, I knew
I loved the Farrier's daughter.

That night I could not sleep nor rest,
My heart was like a hungry water,
Wild as a tempest-throbbing sea,
All passion-stormed and love-opprest,
Her voice, her image haunted me,
The Farrier's lovely daughter.

Soon as the morning light I rose,
And sought the cottage by the water,
My spirit fluttering like a bird.
The sleepy curtains all were close,
And not a movement could be heard
In the home o' the Farrier's daughter.

I went to Ulna bridge, and watched
The dawn reflected in the water.
Oh, what a dawn was flushing o'er
My being then! for love unlatched
The key o' my heart, and oped the door,
Ay! to the Farrier's daughter.

And so the dreamy day lagged on,
And still I watched the shining water.
The forge began to roar and smoke,
The life to stir in Ulna town;
To me the stillness hardly broke;
I loved the Farrier's daughter.

There seemed a strange and subtle spell
That held me gazing on the water.
I dreamed, and, dreaming, felt removed
From all the stir around. Oh, well
I knew the dream, the spell—I loved!—
I loved the Farrier's daughter.

I wandered slowly back at noon,
Along the banks of Ulna Water,
And still unbroken was the charm.
I met her, going to the town,
A market-basket on her arm,
The Farrier's lovely daughter.

She gave from underneath her hood,
From bright blue eyes of purest water,
A sidelong glance, and timid blushed
A gladness, hardly understood,
Swift o'er the eager spirit rushed;
I loved the Farrier's daughter.

At eventide on Ulna stream,
At eventide on Ulna water;
There, as I oared my boat along,
Beneath the pallid moonlight gleam,
Again I heard her legend song,
The Farrier's lovely daughter.

She loitered on by Ulna's side,
And sang the song of "Ulna Water."
I swiftly oared my boat to shore,
And, hastening to the maiden's side,
Beguiled away a pleasant hour
With the dear Farrier's daughter.

A light breeze swept along the stream,
And stirred the ripples in the water,
The envious stars peeped out above.
We glanced by many a pleasing theme,
Lightly, and centred last in love,
I and the Farrier's daughter.

Oh, then I told her all my love,

The deep devotion that I brought her,
And all the hunger of my heart;
She tried, but could not, to reprove
Her little lips refused to part,
The Farrier's lovely daughter.

I marked her mood, her Fancy's vein,
And long and tenderly besought her,
Until I touched her very heart;
I had not pleaded all in vain,
Nor vain had been the instinct art
That wooed the Farrier's daughter.

A little tear bedewed each cheek,

Two little drops of passion-water,

Two silent tokens of her thought,

The pledges which she could not speak,

Sweet pledges which I could not doubt,

The Farrier's lovely daughter.

Ah! lightly sped the moons away,
That brightened over Ulna Water,
Making the cottage windows shine;
And swiftly brought the wedding day,
That crowned our love and made her mine,
The Farrier's lovely daughter.

Alas, how brief are human joys!
O'er Ulna Town and Ulna Water,
Still sweetly shines the moon at Even;
I wander lone beneath the skies,
For she is now a saint in Heaven,
The Farrier's lovely daughter.

O Memory of my long lost bride!
Oft as I walk by Ulna Water,
And watch the ripples as of yore,
I think her wandering by my side
And seem to hear her song once more,
The Farrier's lovely daughter.

1852.

THE BONNIE LASS OF PATTERDALE.

The soft wind from the mountain blows
And gently sighs along the vale,
While wave the daisies on the grave
O' the bonnie lass o' Patterdale.

Oh sweet is the mountain wind that blows,
And sweet are the flowers that deck the vale!
But the sweetest flower that blossomed there
Was Mary, lass o' Patterdale.

She seemed a maiden formed for love,
The pride was she of all the vale,
So young, so fair, so pure o' heart
Was the bonnie lass o' Patterdale.

No trouble vext her light blue eye,

Her cheeks were fresh as the morning gale,
And her curls were like golden clouds that float
At sunset eye o'er Patterdale.

He came, a youth o' gentle mien,
To the lowly cottage in the vale;
A stranger youth, he won the heart
O' the bonnie lass o' Patterdale.

Ah! blythe was the love in her blythe young heart,
That leapt up at the sound o' the guileful tale,
And tender the tear in her light blue eye,
Oh, the bonnie lass o' Patterdale!

He told his love and he won her heart— Ah, me! it was but the old sad tale! For he stole the bloom and brake the trust O' the fairest flower in Patterdale.

They show her grave in the old church yard, There the daisies weep and sighs the gale, And they tell the tale o' the broken heart O' the bonnie lass o' Patterdale.

1853.

THE BRIDE OF THE SOUL.

FAIR rose the morn of an unclouded day,

The branches stirred with the warm breath of Spring,
And all around the frolic breeze did fling

Soft odours of the May.

A sea of light o'erspread the farthest blue,
And the young sunbeams wantoned 'mong the blooms,
That clustering hung embowered amid perfumes,
And tremulous with dew.

The mavis, hid among the garden trees,
Began to warble out his matin lay;
And the lark shook the gateways of the day
With silver melodies.

And in among the climbing plants, that played About my chamber casement open wide,
Their task the honey-getters humming plied,
And a sooth murmur made.

Reclining near the casement, forth I gazed Upon the winsome beauty of the scene-Gay lawn, and garden plot, and meadows green. And far hills purple-hazed.

A hundred rills were leaping in the sun, And laughing out their wild unchecked delight. And one broad river, like a line of light.

Majestically did run;

Swift winding under many a rocky steep, Round jutting crags, whence the rich greenery drooped. And, amorous of the silent waters, stooped And kissed the shadowy deep.

And many a stately vessel in its pride, With white sail driven before the freshening breeze, Danced, floating downward to the distant seas. Upon the gleaming tide.

And here and there, about the grassy meads, The fleecy flocks and milk-white cattle fed, Or waded knee-deep in the river bed To drink among the reeds.

And where the dusty highway wound along, Pass'd peasant groups with laughter and with jest, Or, loitering on, some straggler from the rest Sang snatches of rude song.

All sights, all sounds, hill, meadow, vale and stream, And hundred voices of the happy Spring Stole o'er the soul, and round her seemed to fling An atmosphere of dream.

Long barren fountains of the heart upwelled, And thoughts returned o'er which in youth I mused, And the soul seemed to grow as interfused With all things she beheld.

Stirred with the living glory of the scene, Her being swelled with rapture deep and strong, While round her fair Imaginations throng, Bright shapes she erst had seen,

Or ever Sin and Sorrow, black with storms, Did the bright morning of her days obscure, Those happy days when she was young and pure, And on her vision forms

Of angel loveliness and lustre came
And went, ethereal shapes, whose radiant smiles
Brought with them blessings from the Eden isles,
And woke the kindling flame

Of high poetic ecstacy to birth,
And ever fed and fanned the glowing fire,
And filled the yearning heart with large desire
To charm the listening Earth

With some deep anthemned music, that might chime In harmony with those serenest strains, Chanted, when thoughts were more than golden gains, By bards of ancient time.

Days when my life did blossom forth in flowers,
Sweet flowers scarce heeded then, but now how dear!
Bear witness thou reluctant passionate tear,
How loved those buried hours!

Alas! in youth the happy moments glide
Unprized away, and all too late, we mourn
Joys that are vanished, never to return,
Down Time's swift-hurrying tide.

But now my soul was borne beyond the shades
Of care and grief, and thrilled with new delight;
The bounds of time and place forgotten quite,
She seemed to strike through glades

And mazes peopled thick with faëry dreams,

One with the sunshine round about her glowing,

One with the breezes o'er the landscape blowing,

One with the rills and streams;

Till o'er the scene the sultry noontide crept
And like a child lulled by some soothing lay,
A sweet oblivion stole the sense away,
And in a trance I slept.

How long I lay in sleep I cannot tell,
Bereft of feeling, thought and memory,
Till out of slumber waves of melody
Arose with gradual swell;

And as the tides come sweeping to the strand, Rolled in upon my heart with gushing tone, Like light and rapture flowing from the throne Of God, in Heaven's high land. And like the rustling of the summer air,
When a faint breeze sweeps through the forest glen,
I heard a drawn breath, and was conscious then
Of a bright presence there.

Was it a dream? I knew not: but from eyes
That, as I lay, looked on me from above,
Shone glances warm with meanings of deep love,
And softest sympathies.

For leaning o'er me sat a wingëd shape
Of maiden form and features, robed in white,
And on her brow an anadem of light,
And luscious as the grape

Of southern climes her parted lips, whence came
A fragrance sweeter than from violets blown,
I felt her beating heart against my own,
And heard her speak my name.

But 'twas no earthly speech, her voice was like
That dulcet music, though 'twas blent with sighs,
We image in our dreams of Paradise,
And through me seemed to strike

A bliss like lightning, stirring all the chords
Of life's heart-hidden lyre with magic power;
And like the bee upon the honeyed flower
I hung upon her words.

They seemed to startle Memory from her bowers, Like echoes, floating down dim wildernesses, Far lying 'mong the inmost thought's recesses, Of pre-existent hours.

The balmy spell of tranced sleep,—she said,—
Hath brought me, loved one, to thy side, once more,
From that Elysian home where, erst of yore,
We soul to soul were wed.

Long ere the irresistible command,
Appointing thee thy trial-test, was given,
And thou must leave awhile thy native Heaven,
To roam this barren land.

Rememberest thou at all those blissful years,
When we together dwelt in love and light?
But no! I see thou hast forgotten quite,
And I could melt in tears

Of pitying grief for thee, might angel eyes
Acquaint themselves with weeping, thus to find
All memory of our bridal left behind,
And severed all the ties

That made us one. But let me now recal,
(If still a trace of olden life remains,
Blended with that which warms thy human veins,
Surviving thy deep fall,)

The images of that serener time,

Once thine, ere yet the fateful dawn had birth,

When rising on thy sight the things of earth,

Faded that lovelier clime.

Then as we roamed the everlasting hills,
Or loitered under amaranthine bowers,
Or through fair meads starred with ambrosial flowers,
Or lingered by the rills

That flow down from the Mount of God, descending With softest measured cadences, aye fraught With music passing poet's utmost thought, His richest strains transcending:

How fondly did thy glances answer mine
With love, unlike thy passions here below,
Love purer than the white new-fallen snow,
Or moonbeam's silver shine.

And often, as we sat embowered in light,
I sang thee songs that thou wert charmed to hear,
While other happy wedded souls drew near,
And smiled on our delight.

Ah! then a glory haloed round thy brow,
For never evil dreams of sin did pass
The starry portals of thy mind. Alas!
They are no strangers now.

I do remember when the word was given,
That bade thee take thy flight from yonder skies,
Ere winged for thy holy enterprise,
Thou left'st me lone in Heaven.

There came a flaming seraph, one of those
Who nearest the High Presence stand, and thus,
As with benign regard he looked on us,
His clear calm voice arose!

Spirit,—he said,—for whom the years do flow, Like tides of one continuous stream of joy, And shadowed ne'er by semblance of annoy, Or touch of pain, yet know

That not for joy alone was any soul
Created, but to serve the ends designed
By Him, who doth all ranks of being bind
In one harmonious whole.

He hath assigned to thee new lore to learn, In other sphere new errands to fulfil, And by the duteous working of His will, A large reward to earn.

There is a world by erring mortals trod,
On whose dim shades. Heaven's rays but rarely break,
Among its discords, be it thine to wake
The melodies of God.

Speed there thy flight; born of their race appear,
And shed new gladness o'er their sorrowing throngs,
With human-breathing echoes of the songs
That thou hast anthemned here.

But on thy purity let fall no stain,
Whatever tempter meet thee in the way,
For mightier ones than thou have turned astray,
Nor entered Heaven again.

Lured by Ambition, Envy, Greed and Lust
To bowers of guilt, have drugged the nobler sense.
But thou Immortal, strong in innocence,
Go forth upon thy trust.

The seraph ceased, and as the lightning fleet,
Flew back to the High Throne. A moment's space.
And then, in one intense but brief embrace
Our beings seemed to meet.

And go, I said, since 'tis the Maker's will,
And since 'tis ours His mandate to obey;
Yet deem, Beloved, where'er thou hold'st thy way,
That I am near thee still.

For I shall ever watch thee from above,
Tracking thy triumphs with rejoicing eyes,
And shedding round thee guardian sympathies,
And smiles of tenderest love;

Until thy task accomplished, free from stain,
And pure as now returning to my side,
Thy gathered knowledge thou shalt tell thy bride,
Embracing me again.

Then wheeling downward in a rapid flight
I saw thee, through the waves of ether borne,
Beyond the gateways of the Eternal Morn,
And through dim gulphs of Night.

Till amid anxious kindred of the Earth,
Clothed with an infant form, I saw thine eyes
Open on human things, and heard thy cries,
And smiled upon thy birth.

I marked thee, when to happy boyhood grown, 'Mid dangers that escaped thy careless ken, And my unsleeping love was round thee then, A guardian shelter thrown.

I was the unseen angel of thy youth.

Whose mystic whispers stirred within thy heart
Strong yearnings to achieve a noble part
In holy quest of truth.

'Twas I awoke those passionate aspirations
To fling abroad, in mighty minstrelsy,
Thoughts that should flash the light of Liberty
Among the slumbering nations.

And when thy earliest strains arose clear-voiced,
Like silver fountains from thy heart I knew
Thy spirit to our ancient life still true,
And in thy truth rejoiced.

Oft now in secret do thy sorrows bleed, Recalling those sweet songs of Life's young Spring, Ah! Could'st thou sing as thou wert wont to sing! But thou art changed indeed.

I saw a spirit meet thee on thy way,
With honeyed speech and many a luring wile;
I heard her sing, thy fancy to beguile,
A soft voluptuous lay.

And come, she sang, ere yet the roseate hours
Of youth have vanished from thy glowing sky,
And come before the leaves hang sere and dry,
And perished are the flowers.

The stream of life glides swiftly by, and fleet
Of wing are the warm days of summer-time,
And winter nights, ere long, will wrap the clime
In a white winding sheet.

But come with me, for I've a bower of charms,
Where all sweet loves and luxuries entwine,
And thou shalt drain rich draughts of purple wine,
And drowse in Beauty's arms.

Then while the hurtling wheels of Time roll round, Oblivious of their flight, thy jovial years Shall dance with mirth, and I'll enchant thine ears With witcheries of sound.

I saw the syren clasp thee by the hand,
And lead thee on through many a devious maze,
Adown a hundred interlacing ways
With cunning purpose planned.

Till to her bower ye came; thy footsteps crost
The hidden threshold of her entrance gate;
I cried—Forbear!—The warning came too late,
Thou wert already lost.

Longtime she held thy spirit in a mesh.

At length I saw thee from her home depart,
But with a haggard look, a withered heart,
And tears that streamed afresh,

Chasing each other down thy cheeks, and brow Wrinkled with lines of grief, the glory gone That erst about thy temples played, and shone A beam from Heaven's bright bow.

Through gloomy forests dark thou wandered'st on, And paths with nightshade clusters overhung, Where hissing serpents to the branches clung, And dismal winds made moan.

And over many a wild and grey morass,
Where only the harsh bittern's scream was heard,
Or croak of slimy lizards as they stirred
The rank and matted grass.

While evermore a dark shape hovered near,
On wings of dusky hue; and mocking things,
Of all thy golden youth's imaginings,
He whispered in thine ear.

Till round thee gathered shades of grimmest night
And in thy deep despair I saw thee left,
A shrunken spirit, of all hope bereft,
And widowed of delight.

Yet even now the tender voice of Spring Returning like a dream of days gone by, Hath from thy breast compelled an answering sigh, And made a hidden string,

As smitten by some seer's divining rod,
Within thee thrill to murmurs musical
A token, I would deem, thou art not all
Deserted of thy God.

It may be yet some lingering hope remains,
It may be yet that thou shalt walk with me,
And share the blisses that were wont to be,
Upon the Ethereal plains.

Arise and let us seek thy native Heaven,
And blend our prayers before the sapphire throne,
Ah! who can tell, but mercy may be shown,
And thy dark sin forgiven.

Then will I lead thy steps again through all
The happy scenes where erst we dwelt above,
Until thou hast forgotten in my love
The memory of thy fall.

Or if it be decreed that thou must roam
An alien still, and sink yet lower down,
From all return, barred by the Eternal frown,
To our once Eden home;

By yearnings of immortal sympathy
So closely wedded is my soul with thine,
I can but choose thy downward flight to join,
And share thy woe with thee.

She stayed her speech; I felt a balmy kiss,
Thrilling a moment on my upturned brow,
That shed through all my frame a sudden flow
Of superhuman bliss.

And then, it seemed, I rose and followed her, O'er lawn and field, to that great river's side, A boat lay moored asleep upon the tide, With sail of gossamer. She loosed the moorings as we entered in,
And fast and far along the shining stream,
Our bark flew down with speed of wingëd dream,
While many a vapour thin

Rose like a wraith and wrapt us in its shroud;
Until we came where sea and river meet;
Beneath us then we saw the waves retreat;
And in a fleecy cloud

Our little bark was caught up through the air,
And on the viewless Ether seemed to float.
We voyaged on through realms of space remote,
Beyond the lightning's lair,

Beyond the azure deeps, the Sun's last ray
And past the shining circuits of the stars,
And lighted on a shore within the bars
Of Everlasting Day.

There rose a stately city fair to view,

Her hundred gateways set with many a gem;

And crowned with light, each, as a diadem,

Swift shapes came passing through.

And one to where our keel had struck the shore;
He looked on us with soft and pitying eye,
And spake in tones whose mellow harmony
Will haunt me evermore.

Daughter of Heaven, he said, thy task is vain,
Why hast thou brought this wandered spirit back?
His doom is sealed; no more with thee to track
The bowers of bliss again.

I know what thou would'st urge; I know the prayer
That thou would'st proffer, ere thou tell thy thought.
His own rebellion hath his ruin wrought,
His guilt his own despair.

Fallen from its orbit, ne'er again the star Relumes the azure summits whence it fell; And ne'er again can this fallen spirit dwell Where the Immortals are.

Ah! Could he stand you glittering gates within,
With Heaven's delights his soul once more acquaint,
Alas! His guilty presence there would taint
The atmosphere with sin.

Thine still may be the glory and the bliss,
But he while ages gathering ages crown,
From depth to gloomier depth, must wander down
The fathomless abyss.

Then my companion cried, disconsolate, Nor bliss, nor glory longer lives for me, Though in eternal exile, we will be United in our fate.

And lo! from forth those hundred gates of gold,
As many flashing bolts of wrath were aimed,
And wreaths of lurid fire around us flamed,
And awful thunders rolled.

That with their sound the spell of slumber broke.

And while I slept a mighty storm had risen,

And the fierce lightnings leaping from their prison,

Had felled a giant oak.

I saw the tempest sweep o'er hill and stream,
While in the dales the cattle crouched with fear;
And knew that all I have recorded here
Was but a vagrant dream.

Yet oft in sleep, if mortals only knew,
When our eyes close awhile on things of Earth,
In many a mystic dream is shadowed forth
An image of the true.

1863.

THE MOTHER'S LAMENT.

It was a winter's day. Without the wind was chill as care; Within the place looked desolate, and the walls were lone and bare;

And huddled o'er the hearth an aged woman brooding sate, With her lean hands clasped together, and gazing in the grate At the flickering falling embers, as they struggled and grew faint,

And with muttering moan and many a sigh she made her woful plaint.

Forsaken.—Oh! I did not think that this alas should prove The end of all a mother's care, and a mother's tender love; I did not think to see the hope of all my years undone, To be forgotten thus, and left to feed my grief alone. Alone and vainly brooding some sweet companion crave. Not one to love me in mine age, or mourn me in my grave.

Ungrateful, oh ungrateful! cold is the winter day. But colder are the hearts that selfishness hath stolen away: Not one kind thought of love, not one unselfish hour to spare Nor grateful memory cherished of old maternal care:

A useless garment thrown aside. Ah! wherefore care to know

That the mother of their infant joys is weeping in her woe?

I shudder; for I cannot bear to hear that whistling wind, It sounds so like my children's scorn and seems to mock my mind

How cold it is! I wish the shivering embers would but blaze. They look so dull and dead, and swarm with the ghosts of other days,

Which I cannot help but see with their mocking faces there, And I know not if I wake or dream, only that I despair.

I seem to see them as of old: my pet with the golden curls, And my firstborn, and my little mild demure and darkhaired girls,

And the twins, who were never found apart, but would wander

out for hours

On the common, and in the neighbouring wood, and bring

back heaps of flowers,

And some violets for mother, and would ask with earnest eve, Why the pretty flowers they loved, so soon, should wither away and die

Alack a day! But my bright-haired boy grew hard, and cursed his mother.

And went a wicked way, and little better was his brother,

My firstborn, he who went abroad and grew rich, as the people told,

Though I know not, for I never again saw either him or his gold.

And my little demure and dark-eved girls, who played about my knee.

Are married, with children of their own, and no time to think of me.

And the twins who brought me violets, and I think would have been true,

Are dead, and sleep in the churchyard, beneath the grim old

And I wish that I were with them, for life is a burden grown, And I weary of my days and long to be no more alone. I will not curse my cruel ones, for indeed I love them yet, And though they have all forgotten me, yet God will not forget.

1854.

PHILIP ARMITAGE.

HERE let me pause, beside this well-worn stile! How dear and how familiar is the scene! The vale, where you sequestered homestead peeps, Through the surrounding poplars, with its roof Of thatch and smoke upcurling; you blue stream Slowly meandering underneath the hills, Whose slopes, all golden with the waving wheat, Gleam in the sunshine! and that neighbouring wood. Where, in my youth with Philip Armitage, It was my wont to roam intent on sport.— Poor Philip! though twelve years have passed away, And each, how like an age of strange event! Since here with thee I parted, nevermore To meet among the ways of men, it seems As fresh within the memory, as 'twere A tale of yesterday. The fields, the hills, The stream the same; the very clouds of heaven Seeming to wear the shapes they wore that day; And but for here and there a streak of grey Amid these locks that tells of waning years. And but for this sad burden at my heart, Fruit of a life of sorrows, and but that I miss thy hearty, hale companionship, Thou best of friends, so all in all the same Do all things round me here an aspect wear, I might persuade myself that all the Past Was but a dream and that I still am young.

Ah! then of all the farmers round was none Prosperous and blythe as Philip Armitage;

Then none had ampler crops or richer herds; Was none so envied; none respected more; And none could boast a sweeter, happier home. Oh! then thy Jane, about the household ways, Did move like some presiding fav, as e'er, When mealtime came and warned thee home, she met Thy footsteps at the door, and welcomed thee With wifely smile. And in the winter nights, When winds blew loud and snow was on the ground, How often, muffled in my warmest cloak, Whistling defiance to the wind and weather, I've crost these hills, and vonder bridge, and gained Thy door, and seated soon beside the hearth, While Jane brought out the pipes and broached the ale, Indulged in pleasant chat, a thousand jests And merry quips between us passing there! Ay! those were pleasant nights; and when the months Brought round the merry Yule-tide, at thy board, That groaned with goodliest festive Christmas fare, The neighbouring farmers sat assembled round, While the roof rang with laughter, merrily Repeating tales of mirth, or else discussed The game, or wrangled over themes of state, Or took to task our rulers' policy, Talking of manufactures and free trade, Whilst thou, a very king within thy home, Delightedly beheld'st their mirth, thy self A sun of cheerfulness diffusing life, Contentment, pleasure, happiness to all. Thou ever hadst a generous heart, too free And unsuspecting for this evil world, Where knavery besets on every hand The true warm-hearted man; and when besought, Alas in an ill hour for thee! to stand Security for one who well thou lov'dst. Thy brother's eldest son, with eager hand, Undreaming of deception and imposture, Thou gav'st thy bond for twice five hundred pounds, I feared the issue, warned thee that one day Thou wouldst repent thy kindness. By thy own Clear truthful conscience didst thou judge of others, And gaily saidst that not another man More honest, upright and fair dealing lived, Than Marmaduke thy nephew.

Scarce a year Had flown, ere ruin stared thee in the face. Thy villain kinsman fled his creditors. Bankrupt in fortune and in character, And left to thee and other of his friends A legacy of debt. On thee the worst The heavy hand of this misfortune fell. Thy farm, thy crops, thy household goods, thy all Were sold to liquidate the bond. And here I met thee last and breathed a sad adieu. Ere with thy wife and infant son 'twas thine To leave the pleasant fields, that hitherto Thy fostering care had known, and seek a home And a new fortune o'er the distant sea. And thou art gone! a better braver friend Ne'er clasped a hand in mine. Within my breast The tender memory of thy worth is prized, And shall be cherished ever till I die. Prolific fount of dreams of other days. The dear delightful morning-time of life Recalled, reshaped in retrospective hour. Poor Philip Armitage! thy wife thy child Both died upon the voyage, leaving thee To pray for Heaven's forgiveness on the head Of that false-hearted nephew, who abused Thy confidence and laid thy life in ruins. A broken hearted man thou stepp'dst on shore, And welcome Death soon laid his hand upon thee In that Australian clime. There stranger hands Hollowed thy narrow grave and piled the sod Above thine ashes, Rest, dear friend, in peace Would God I too were lying in my grave, No longer as I am a friendless man, In the declining autumn of my days Grief-worn and desolate. A mournful joy It yields me to recal the buried years. And dream of days that never can return.

ALL IN A YEAR.

I.

'Twas on a day in May,

And like children at their play,

The frolic breezes wandered in among the fresh green leaves;
His flight to heaven winging,

The matin lark was singing,

And the new-fledged sparrows twittered underneath the cottage eaves.

Among the garden bowers,

Where the many-coloured flowers,

Voluptuous roses red and white, and honeysuckles twined,

In the warm sunny weather, We rambled out together,

And I whispered thee, my dearest, the secret of my mind.

In thine eye of tender blue I read the answer true,

Which gave me sweet assurance that I loved thee not in vain;

Nor in thine eye alone, But thy voice of gentlest tone,

Fell on mine ear, as on parched grass falls the moist summer

H

'Twas on a July morn,

And the fields of yellowing corn

In rich luxuriance waved amid a flood of golden beams;

And, as with languor drooping, The willow boughs were stooping,

And leaning down in love to kiss the merry sparkling streams.

We crossed the chalky fells, And a sound of bridal bells

Came up, like a delicious strain of music, from the vale;

And our hearts as well they might,

Were beating with delight,

For we knew for whom those joyous notes swelled on the summer gale.

With lips that did not falter, Before the village altar,

The solemn troth we plighted that bound our hearts for life;

O, day to memory sweet,

That made my bliss complete,
As with rapture, from beneath the porch, I led thee forth a wife!

III.

'Twas on a wintry night,
When December snows dropt white

On fell and field and garden, and among the naked boughs

The hollow wind shrieked loud, That I sat with sorrow bowed,

For a grim unwelcome presence had made silence in the house.

With pale and shrouded form, Unheeding of the storm,

Alas! unheeding of the tears that I so wildly wept;

Thou did'st lie upon thy bed, And they told me thou wert dead.

And all that night beside thee I a mournful vigil kept.

Long years have passed away, And my locks are wearing grey,

But still I dream of thee; and still the memory of our love

Around my heart is clinging, And I seem to hear a ringing

Of marriage bells that call my soul to bridal bowers above. 1861.

CORALIE.

Thy home shines white
In the clear moonlight,
And thou within art sleeping;
Thou art taking thy rest
On a clay-cold breast,
And I, at thy door, kneel weeping;
For thy sleep is so long,
Thou dost me wrong,
Awake and come forth to thy lover!
Or let me pass through
The portal too,
And the theme of thy dream discover.

False tongues have said
That thou art dead,
But they shall not deceive me,
For the love I bear,
To my soul doth declare,
Thou art too true to leave me.

Dead! How should this be?
Thou hast pledged to me
Thine heart, mine own for ever;
The bands that vow
Hath twined, sure thou
Wouldst ne'er unkindly sever.

I know, for my sake,
That thou wilt wake,
Soon as my wish shall reach thee;
O Coralie!
Come forth to me!
Delay not, I beseech thee!
A voice comes sweet
Mine ear to greet:—
Wait till the night be over,
And the morning's wing
Again shall bring
Coralie to her lover.

1893.

BLEIR BLOCK.

A ROMANCE OF WARBLINGTON CASTLE.

The cornfields wide are waving green,
The meadows starred with flowers,
And o'er the happy summer scene
Frown the grim feudal towers;
The breeze among the ivy plays,
That creeps around the ruin,
A sober raiment wrought by Time
To hide his own undoing.

Reclining idly on the grass,
I give my fancy play,
'Mong legends of the long ago,
As in a dream to stray;
And one, a sad and fearful tale
Which, to this ruin hoary,
Hath clung for many and many an age,
I will record in story.

Here dwelt of yore—the legend tells,—In feudal state Earl Guy,
Whose lands around, a vast domain
For many a league doth lie;
Here on his bidding waited leal,
Retainer, squire, and vassal,
And twice a year, his toiling serfs
Brought tribute to the Castle.

An only child had bold Earl Guy,
A blue-eyed, gentle maid,
Fair as the lily-bud that opes
Its bloom in summer glade;
And clearer than the limpid stream,
White as the moon unclouded,
Pure as fresh-fallen snow her soul,
By no dark fancy shrouded.

Pride of her sire, to others stern,
He ne'er was stern to her,
For in her face he could discern
Her mother's features fair;
And when he met her mild-eyed gaze,
His mailëd heart grew tender:—
"She brings my sainted one to mind,
May all good saints defend her."

Seventeen sweet years he fondly watched
His darling's budding life,—
"Proud will my cousin Egmont be,
With Alice for his wife!
Fair are these goodly lands of mine!
Lord Egmont's lands are fairer!
But she shall both domains unite,
Of two proud titles wearer!"

A neighbouring hall Lord Egmont owned,
No braver baron bore

Arms at his king's and country's call
To turn the tide of war;

And in the gentler tilt of love,
Ev'n in the royal palace,
Had hearts been captured by his glance,
But none he loved like Alice.

But in the chambers of her heart
Her cousin had no place;
Cold to his martial fame and deeds,
His long and ancient race;
The lily pale to the harsh gale,
Its sweets will not discover,
And like a timorous flower she shrank
From her too haughty lover.

Yet when was love's dear witching dream
To maiden's heart unknown?
And when did Beauty choose to bloom
Unsought, unloved, alone?
And ah! I deem that even now,
Her breast with love is laden!
A peasant youth had won the heart
Of that high-lineaged maiden.

A gun-shot from the castle walls,
Beside the lonely shore,
Lies Limbourne meadow in deep gloom,
By elm trees shadowed o'er;
There twice a day the salt sea-waves
Come dashing up the harbour,
And bring the fisher from his cot,
Hid in yon leavy arbour.

There Bleir Block lived, a widowed man,
And toiled from day to day;
Few were his gains, and coarse his fare,
And yet his heart was gay,
For gracious Heaven, a noble boy
To wean his soul from sadness,
Had given him; and young Allan filled
His humble home with gladness.

In that lone cot the stripling grew
A gentle guileless youth,
One whom to look at was to love,
For on his brow white Truth
Had set her royal signet-seal,
And in each line and feature
Of his fair countenance you marked
The unspoiled child of Nature.

His mind was cast in beauteous mould,
And though but scant his lore
Of what is learned from written books,
Dame Nature taught him more
Than they could ever teach,—the leaves,
The breeze so softly stealing,
The flowers and fields his tutors were,
In many a sweet revealing.

And oft in deep and downcast thought,
He sat at eventime,
And held high converse with his dreams,
And wove them into rhyme,
Free-hearted lyrics, untaught lays
That feared no critic malice;—
Such was the youth, that won the troth,
Of the fair Lady Alice.

And how they met, and how first loved,
It boots not now to tell;
Suffice it that they met and loved,
They loved, alas! too well!
Ah me! that Love's bright veil of light
So dark a dread should cover!
That envious Fate the bliss should blight,
Of happy maid and lover!

They recked not of the cruel world,
Nor of her father's pride,
Glad in each other's joy, their souls
Gave heed to nought beside;
And often at the trysting time,
In the warm summer weather,
They sat in the deep arbour-shade
Clasped heart to heart together.

There would they stay for hours and tell
Their love in accents meek,
Or silently their meeting eyes
Looked more than words might speak;
And oh! on earth there is not known,
A sweeter purer feeling,
Than that of young and loving hearts
Their inmost thoughts revealing.

And as the boy enchanted hung
Upon her dreamy eyes,
And listened to her balmy words
That breathed of Paradise,
It seemed an angel had come down
From Heaven's star-lighted portal,
To teach him how the spirits love
In those far lands immortal.

Meanwhile her suitor Egmont came,
Her father's frequent guest,
And poured in her unwilling ear
The secret of his breast.
A stranger ever to despair;
A word might yet be spoken,
Or silent blush upon her cheek
Might yield affection's token.

For skilled in arts of war, he knew,
How fort, that long withstood
The terror of the spoiler's hosts,
At length hath been subdued,
By slaughter thinned, by famine worn
Its band of brave defenders,
No longer it endures the seige,
But to the foe surrenders.

And skilled in arts of love, he knew
How suitor long denied,
By woman's coyness unrepelled,
May conquer woman's pride,
Till all the charm'd heart in her breast,
Responds to love's fond yearning,
And passion bursts its pent-up bounds,
Sweet sighs for sighs returning.

And thus he deemed that yet the hand
Of Alice might be won,
That his ancestral halls should see
The pride of Warblington
To Egmont's haughty house allied;
And oft in thought he carried
Hope onward to the future, when
They should at length be married.

"A gentle partner she will make,
When I, her happy lord,
At bruit of war am called away,
"Tis she shall bring my sword,
And bind it on, and bid me go
Where rolls the battle gory,
And come again with honour crowned,
That she may share my glory.

Or when inglorious peace returns,
My armour laid aside,
My good steed in his stall, and nought
To feed my hungry pride,
My bride shall sing some minstrel lay,
To soothe my restless spirit,
And the hot blood within my veins
Shall pause awhile to hear it."

In the tall window's arched recess,
Where many a carving quaint
Appeared, with forms of leaf and scroll,
Of cherub and of saint,
She sat before her broidery frame
The busy needle plying,
And Egmont stood beside her there,
Now pleading and now sighing.

"And wilt thou never bid me hope?
And must I nurse for aye
A fruitless passion in my breast,
From weary day to day?
And dost thou hold my love so light,
Too cold for aught to move thee?"
A teardrop dewed her gentle cheek—
"O cease! I cannot love thee.

"Thy martial worth and fame I know;
Thy valour has been proved;
But his must be a gentler soul
Who would by me be loved.
I love thee as a cousin should,—
Nay more,—even as a brother,"—
A strange suspicion crost his mind,—
"Alice! thou loy'st another!"

Then all at once, a red blush spread
Her pure pale features o'er,
And sudden pass'd again, and left
Her paler than before.
Her secret known, her bosom shook
With terror undissembled,
She shrank before his keen, dark glance,
And like an aspen trembled.

Awhile she sat dismayed, transfixed,
Like one who hears her doom
Pronounced, then like a startled fawn
Arose and fled the room,
And sought her chamber; where before
Her mother's picture kneeling,
A flood of passionate tears relieved
Her agony of feeling.

Ah! gentle Alice would that death
Had come to thee that day,
And hushed thy spirit's guileless breath,
And borne thy soul away!
Far happier, then had, been thy fate,
From the kind grave to borrow
A sweet eternal ignorance
Of all the coming sorrow.

For now in Egmont's mind no peace Suspicion will allow, One evil purpose only lurks Beneath that haughty brow,— To be revenged upon the man On whom her love had lighted, The hated rival, for whose sake His proud suit had been slighted.

Nor long, with cruel thought, he nursed His unfulfilled desire,
Too soon her love's delightful dream Was fated to expire:
Ah! little did they deem, fond pair,
With the bright hope before them,
Of that malignant cloud of doom
Already gathering o'er them.

It was a balmy summer eve,
Close of a balmy day,
The harbour waves were murmuring calm,
The fisher was away,
They sat beside the cottage door,
And watched the red sun setting,
And talked together of their love,
All other themes forgetting.

They marked not one who stood and watched,
Hid in the arbour shade,
With dark and scowling glances fixed
Upon the youth and maid,
He heard their fondly uttered vows,
Beheld their meek embraces,
And saw the rapture-speaking bliss
That lighted up their faces.

A shriek, a groan, a mocking laugh,—
Too surely sped the blade,—
And then the murderer bore away
The fainting, senseless maid,
And on the threshold of the door
There left the peasant-lover,
His fair hair crimsoned with his blood,
His youthful life-dream over.

What grief will rend the parent's heart
Returning to his home!
Ah! better had the harbour-waves
Opened for him a tomb!
Ah! better had he found his rest
Beneath the wandering water,
Than lived to see that bleeding corse,
And wail that cruel slaughter!

He came, beheld his hapless boy,
All weltering in his blood,
Cut off in manhood's opening bloom,
So gentle and so good.
What words can paint the agony
Of that bereaved father,
Or of the anguish limn the lines
That o'er his features gather?

He knelt beside him on the ground,
And felt his silent heart,
And clasped his hand and kissed his lips
Lying all cold apart.
He talked to him as one alive,
And called him fair and comely,
His beauteous boy, and asked him why,
He lay so still and dumbly?

Alas! old man! thy home and hearth
Henceforth must lonely be,
Nor e'er shall lips of Allan Block
Move more to answer thee.
He raised him softly from the ground,
And to his chamber bore him,
And stood beside him, all that night,
With vain tears weeping o'er him.

But when the morning's rosy light
Came ushering in the day,
Upon the chamber floor he knelt
A direful prayer to pray;
On the dread angel loud he called,
And sued to have recorded
In his grim register the oath
Thus fiercely, wildly worded:—

"Curs'd be the hand that dealt this blow,
My unoffending boy!
And cursed be the cruel heart
That crushed thy father's joy!
And curs'd be I of God and man,
If e'er relenting tender
Withold my hand, upon thy slayer
A like revenge to render!"

But whither hath the murderer gone,
Bearing the swoonëd maid?
Right to the towers of Warblington
With hasty steps he sped.
Then to her room, their lady's form,
Her women gently carried;
And in the castle, all that night,
The cruel baron tarried.

There in the hearing of Earl Guy,
Told how the maid had loved
A peasant-youth, and how beneath
His steel the issue proved.
Reminded he her father then,
Of promise long contracted,
And from the Earl's compliant lips
A ready pledge exacted.

That ere the new and rising moon
Had twice her crescent shown,
The bells of Warblington should peal
A merry bridal tune;
The bridegroom, he; Alice, the bride,
Or willing or unwilling;—
Alas! Dear maid, life's cup for thee
With woe is quickly filling.

It was a golden August morn,
Perfumed with breath of flowers,
And a rich swell of music pealed
From Warblington's old towers;
Smiling a blessing on the graves,
The merry sun was shining;
And round the antique porch a troop
Of maids were garlands twining.

And lo! from forth the opening door
Issued the bridal pair,
She paler than the lily blooms
That wreathed her yellow hair;
He proudly stepping, but no sign
Of his emotion showing,
Save the keen light of triumph seen
In his dark glances glowing.

Ah! had the village maidens known
The woe of that fair bride,
They had not envied her her place
By that proud baron's side,
The wife of one she never now
Could look on with affection,
With whom within her mind was blent
One hideous recollection.

The memory of that eve of blood,
When he, she loved, was slain,
Burnt in for ever like a brand
Upon her heart and brain;
So harshly reft the tender dream
Her maiden hope had cherished,
Her love crushed like an early bud,
Her peace for ever perished.

But Time that brings us many a change,
While seasons wax and wane,
By long familiar wont will blunt
The edge of keenest pain;
Nor did he leave her gentle mind
A prey to anguish wholly,
But with the years her grief assumed
A chastened melancholy.

Pass we five years.—Meanwhile an heir To Egmont's lands was born, A lovely boy with deep blue eyes, And cheeks the hue of morn; And as she gazed upon her child, His tender-hearted mother Felt the new love, within her breast, The old grief almost smother.

Nor less to Egmont did it give
A mingled pride and joy,
To sit and watch the merry glee
And pastimes of his boy;
And oft his fancy carved for him
A proud career of glory,
To add to his baronial line
An added fame in story.

And did no wild misgivings cross
His brain, no memories climb
The ladder of his thoughts and there
Confront him with his crime?
He who had quenched a father's joy,
Had wrought a father's madness,
How dared he hope his own fair child
Should prove a source of gladness?

And yet he hoped, nor of his crime
Did scarce a thought retain,
Finding in pride of noble blood
Acquittal for the slain.
Yet sometimes in his dreams, at night,
A phantom dread crept o'er him,
And a wan blood-bedabbled form
Stood spectre-like before him.

One night upon his couch he lay,
More than his wont disturbed.
By visions breaking on his rest,
Disdaining to be curbed;
And starting up with wild affright,
(The night-lamp dimly burning,)
Dark shapes amid the chamber-space,
Seemed going and returning.

And all at once he saw, or thought
He saw an old man stand
Beside him, with a haggard look
And dread uplifted hand;
On his left arm an infant lay,
Bereft of life and feeling,
And in slow whispers from his lips
He heard these words come stealing.

He heard, or did he only dream?

"Revenge may tarry long;
But never yet did Heaven permit
On Earth unpunished wrong.

Five years ago my child from me
Thy murderous hand did sever;
And like to like! I render thee
A childless man for ever."

The phantom glided from the room,
And heavy sleep again
Banished the terror of his dream
From Egmont's troubled brain.
He slept until at length the bells,
The morning hour, were telling;
Then woke to hear a sudden stir,
Unwonted, in his dwelling.

And all too soon, to his dismay,
His wretched bitter lot,
He learned the cause. His darling child
Was missing from his cot.
In vain they sought him o'er and o'er,
'Mong chambers long neglected,
And every nook the mansion held
With eager care inspected;

No traces of the boy appeared;
Until as night grew late,
A hasty knock, the warden heard,
Upon the postern gate;
And hieing thither, he beheld
From Warblington a vassal,
Commissioned by Earl Guy, who brought
Strange tidings from the castle.

At break of morning to his toil
Passing o'er Limbourne mead,
A peasant lad had stumbled o'er
An infant lying dead,
Lord Egmont's child, and in his arms
The lifeless babe had taken
To Bleir Block's cot and found the place
Bare, empty and forsaken.

To Alice when the truth was told,
It came, as though a dart,
Winged by the cruel hand of Fate,
Had pierced her to the heart.
She wept not, spake not, strangely smiled,
Gazed vacantly around her,
Her reason fled and maniac Woe
In chains of madness bound her.

And as the long months glided by,
She wandered like a ghost,
From room to room, with stealthy step,
Seeking for something lost,
She knew not what: until by Death
The pitying stroke was given,
And she passed hence to find her child,
And her lost love in heaven.

Soon as, with solemn rites observed,
They laid her in the grave,
Lord Egmont his baronial halls
Forsook and o'er the wave,
Seeking escape from bitter thoughts
And memories that enchain him,
Hied him, and joined the hosts, and fell,
In battle with the Paynim.

And many an age hath vanished since,
While Time hath poured his sands,
Sole relic of those feudal days
The ruined castle stands:
Yet still Tradition from the Past
This piteous tale doth borrow,
And still the story is preserved
Of Alice and her sorrow.

But nought, of Bleir Block and his fate,
More doth the legend tell,
Nor whither went, nor how he lived,
Nor when his death befel.
Yet still they say, at eventime
Two shapes around the ruin,
Are seen to glide, a little child
An aged man pursuing.

And village girls and village boys,
At set of summer day,
From Langston beach, across the fields
Returning home from play,
Their footsteps urge to double speed
O'er Limbourne's fated meadow,
Nor cast a look behind, for fear
Of Bleir Block's ghastly shadow.

A STORY OF TWO LOVES.

THE Sun is bright and warm, the sky is clear, No wandering cloud to fleck the blue, and near And far, this sweet and summer morn, around Breathes a delicious harmony of sound:— The breeze that mong the branches makes a stir Of leaves; the chirking of the grasshopper; The wild notes of the woodlark, and the noise Of singing, shouting, merry shepherd boys; The lowing of the milkwhite kine; the bleat Of lambs: the plash of waters at my feet As the stream eddies by me; these all blend Together in one strain, and seem to lend The charm of art to Nature, and to melt This throbbing heart within me, rather felt Than heard. All sense of mere material things Forgotten quite, my soul hath found her wings, And in imagination ranges on, (Past, Present, Future all dissolved in one.) Through many a faëry labyrinth of Mind, Where thoughts with fancies strangely are entwined, Like flowers in woodland maze; and all things seem Life, Time and Death, the wonders of a dream.

A dream! Ah! dreams come thronging back to me Like to the murmurs of a far-off sea Heard by some lonely wanderer on his road. Making of solitude a solitude Yet lonelier; dreams of other days, that bring Back memories of the Morning and the Spring Of Life's young journey, when an eager bird, Just plumed for rapid and far flight and stirred With magic hopes and ardours, clad in youth, And youth's white vestments innocence, and truth And Love, my soul sprang forth, with high intent, On noble enterprise and triumph bent, Laughing at danger, fearless of alarm, Shouting a brave defiance to the storm, Nerved to whatever conflict might arise, Her trust in God, her goal beyond the skies.

Oh! well I mind me of that time, those hours, When Happiness, high Lord, among the bowers Of life a monarch sat enthroned: I held Deep converse there with mighty shapes of Eld. Spirits of great men vanished from the Earth, The primates of the days when Freedom had her birth. Freedom! my boyhood's idol! Then how bright Her maiden presence: like a shape of light She came, an angel-bringer of delight. Within the radiant temple of the Mind Her altar burned, and there she dwelt enshrined The Empress of my thought; and streaming high From the starred dome, trophies of Victory Already seemed to hang, bright gonfalons enwrought With pictured wonders of far-reaching Thought; While rolled, as oft in some cathedral choir, Loud music winged with the heart's swift desire. Echoing from stately column on to column. Epic and ode and lyric, sweet and solemn, Triumphant, rapturous, fraught with prophecy Of days immortal, glorious, grand and free, Days of the Golden Age that is to be. The era of the Perfect Man. In dreams Like these I revelled, drowned amid the beams Of Morning, like the lark lost in the skies, At break of day trilling his melodies On mortal ear, unseen by mortal eyes. No thought to the world's selfish strife I gave, But fed upon my dreams; and wave on wave Of Poesy came gushing from my heart, Boy-songs that borrowed little from mere Art, But wild, impulsive, free, to Nature true And to the soul within. Thus Poesv grew To be my spirit's natural dress and hue, The heart's appropriate language.

Sweet it was,
In those young days, to wander forth and pass
Beyond the precincts of the busy town,
And drink the balmy breeze upon the down;
Or by the winding river-marge for hours
To stroll, and mark the nodding weeds and flowers,
That overhung the bank, lean to the tide,
And drink the freshening waters; or to glide,
In lightest shallop, under wood and hill,

Borne onward by the restless stream at will. Oftimes reclining elbow-deep in flowers, Violets and daisies, I would while the hours Away in still retired woodland nook. Rapt o'er the pages of some antique book Of wild romance. One favourite nook the best I loved, and haunted more than all the rest. It was a little lovely place, such spot As but once seen is nevermore forgot, But ever after in the memory seems To keep a pictured room apart, for dreams And lightest thoughts to glance on. The wild flowers And sunbeams mingled there, and gaily played. Like careless children on the tufted glade, Watched over by the warm and fostering hours. A little lawn it was, and closely shaven, And sloped towards a rivulet, that a haven Found in the smooth green bank. 'Twas all surrounded By trees and thickest mazes in a crowd. That no intruding thoroughfare allowed. Save here and there some little avenue Seeming to form a skilful pathway through The wood; there oft the lightsome leveret bounded Along, and the wild partridge shyly swimming On sail-like wings; anon the swallows, skimming O'er the blue waters of the murmuring river, Set all the breeze-blown ripples in a shiver, As their wings gently touched them; not a sound Ere broke the narrow stillness, save around The chirking of the grasshopper, the bee's Warm welcome burr, or else, amid the trees Poured sweetly forth in mellow mournful gushes. The sad yet passionate music of the thrushes.

But I remember most how, on a day
It fell, that hitherward I bent my way,
And not alone. For one sat here with me,
Bright as a star, fair as a destiny,
More beautiful than fabled nymph or dryad,
And lovelier than a dream of slumber. I had
Found here at length, or so to me it seemed,
A brighter dream than I had ever dreamed,
No, not a dream, a living shape and human,
A fair and beautiful and loving woman.
We sat and read together an old story

Of passion and of War, of Love and Glory.— A noble knight, who in a palace aerv Wooed, won and wed a royal Queen of Faery, That ruled in groves of Elf-land, long ago:— And, as we read, our hearts throbbed to and fro, And beat in measure to the verse. Her hair Fell in loose waves, glossy, yellow and fair, And floated o'er my shoulder, where she leant Her head: her eyes, now on the volume bent, And now to mine upturned. Oh, deep dark eyes! That mirrored back my soul, as lakes the skies. Liquid and languishing, voluptuous, warm With tenderest love; their swift and subtle charm Thrilled every fibre of my frame: until No longer master of my vanquished will, I flung my arms around her, wildly pressed My lips to hers and strained her to my breast; Then in the overflow of passion, wrought To ravishment that steals the sense of thought From the enamoured spirit quite away, Locked in that dear embrace our twin hearts lay Beating together. Ourselves we could not tear From that wild agony of bliss that tranced us there. That Eden of the heart, that overwhelming sea Of Pain, Oblivion, Anguish, Ecstasy.

Thenceforth what added charms to life were lent! No cloud o'erhung our Heaven; where'er we went, Hope's radiant rainbow overarched the skies, And all the air was full of Paradise. United in the bark of life we sped Along the stream, by dear love piloted, 'Mong Eden isles and spheres of golden day And under purple capes of dream that lav Suffused in sunshine, and through starry caves Of splendour washed by ever-singing waves, And syren-haunted grots; by many a shore Of light and wonder; mountains tinted o'er With hues ethereal; joys on every hand Bloomed round about us in that fairy land, That visionary realm; from all things there Murmured the voice of Passion, from the air That drowsed in summertide, and from the breeze That shook light rustling music from the trees, And from cool whispers of the falling showers,

And from the incense of the odorous flowers, And from the songs that overflowed the bowers, And from the forest tongues, and from the hills, And from the singing vales and warbling rills, And from the language of impassioned story, From Art, Romance and Song, whate'er of glory To ancient Time belongs; and from the years, And from December's snows and April's tears. And from all beauteous, all inspiring things, Came soft articulate silver whisperings, By unseen spirits that our journey haunted, Ecstatic breathed; ensnared, bewrayed, enchanted, The livelong year to us a summer-day, And all the months a few brief hours in May, A spell upon us wheresoe'er we roved, All things did utter love, and ah! we loved.

How many secret snares in Fairy grove Lie hid! ah me! thus to be lured of Love, What woe was mine! O false and treacherous guide That led me out into the summertide Of Passion's dangerous dream, and paved the way With flowers and sunbeams, only to betray My heart the easier! wherefore didst assure me With a false pledge, and with false hope allure me? Oh! wherefore didst thou spread thy snares for me? Couldst thou not let the singing-bird go free? Ah! wherefore, unto thy delightful realm, Didst thou my frail bark steer, but to o'erwhelm With storms of sorrow and despair? Had Death, In passing by us, stolen the dear breath Of life away for ever from those lips I loved, oh! not so dread had been the eclipse, As that it was my lot to mourn! Ah woe! That hearts, that once have trusted, should forego Their trust, and winter-coldness intervene, Where erst the warmth of golden June hath been! That kindred souls should disunited be, That ere united were! Eternity, For but one phase of love, is all too brief! Ah! why should Passion e'er clasp hands with grief?

Farewell, sweet season brimming with delights, Dear dreamy days and warm and balmy nights, For ever flown! What cruel wind hath torn My garland from me, and beyond the bourne Of Fairy land my spirit's bark hath driven? Farewell, thou earthly Paradise, thou heaven Below, wherein I wandered for awhile, And fed my fancy with the treacherous smile Of Love's delusive orb! Farewell, gay garden Of early youth, at whose fair gates, stern warden Doth Sorrow stand to hinder my return, Uttering a language I am loth to learn! O harsh oblivion, that will not smother This agonizing memory!

For another. The maiden of my heart that heart forsook: He could not love her more than I; not look With tenderer eyes; not clasp her in embrace, More fond than mine; not dote upon her face More passionately. Ah, cruel and inhuman! Oh, false, and fickle and unhappy woman! I know the recollections of those hours. Spent hand in hand with me among the bowers. Can haunt thy memory not less than mine; Like dank sepulchral weeds, they will entwine A ghastly garland round thy heart, and there Thy soul's intenser eye in black despair Must e'er be fixed: Thou canst not help but gaze, With poignant retrospection, through the haze Of years, on days to which a spell belongs, A spell no time can quench, nor tears, nor wrongs.

Soon as that vision vanished with its hues And forms ethereal, its unclouded views Of life, its brimming cup of bliss afar, Leaving Earth worn and wan, my soul, a star Fallen from the starry throng, did wander wide Through desolation and the death-like void Of Night-imprisoned realms; no kindred beam To break the obscurity of Thought; no stream Of silver melody to win the ear Of woe to listen, or compel the tear Of tenderness from eyes wherein despair Sat blank and cold as winter. Waste and wild Life's pathway grew, by ne'er a flower beguiled, Save, here and there, upon its broken spray A lily or a rose, no longer gay,

The withered semblance of its yesterday;
And save indeed the nightshade, that still bloomed
An emblem of those happy days entombed
Beneath the cold sepulchral urn of grief.
Within that dismal wilderness, no leaf
But fell at my approach, of air no breath
But seemed to whisper syllables of death
And dread annihilation; nor did wave
A weed that seemed not, o'er the spirit's grave,
A funeral plume, a badge of utter woe,—
Ah! how unlike Love's pageantry of Long-ago!

And where was now my radiant temple? where The emblazoned gonfalons that glittered there? The loud exultant choral harmonies? The keen-eyed and far-thoughted prophecies? The stately colonnades? the starry dome? And that fair goddess, who had there her home And wonder-fashioned shrine? It had become Like some war-blasted ruin, wreck-bestrewn, That hallowing ivy hath not yet o'ergrown, As tender of its scars; a dreary fane Roofless and void and shattered; no soft strain Of hope or joyance ever sounding there, But only low sad dirges of despair, Like wailings of tormented sprites that roam The caverned midnight. Even as a tomb It was, and all deserted, but for one Pale phantom thing, that ever wandered on From wreck to wreck, and circled round the ruin, As 'twere exulting in the dire undoing Of such an edifice and such a plan, And speaking scornful words of God and man.

O'er the crushed Mind an undivided sway Tyrannic Doubt maintained; nor any ray Of light celestial glistened on my path, But only clouds portentous, big with wrath And tempest, hovered o'er me. Like a leaf, Sere, sapless and decayed, my heart by grief, As by a chill November blast, was borne Hither and thither, fugitive, forlorn, And of all Faith bereft. Without a stay, My weeping spirit held her woful way, Her vague and aimless journey, wheresoe'er

Doubt, her malignant pilot, guided her:
O'er many a barren wild and waste morass,
And thorough treacherous thicket we did pass,
Where lurked in gloom the serpent's hissing den
Or lair of crouching leopard, to a glen
Midnighted, terror-haunted, underneath
The low black beetling crags of utter Death,
A place of sighs and groans and only trod
By shapes of ill, shut out from Heaven and God.

Oh! for some gentle beam to break the gloom, In which the soul immersed, a living tomb Of life among the tombs of Youth and Bliss Thought and Imagination, an abyss Of night in deeper night involved, exiled From all delights of Nature that beguiled Her once, lay long and in her misery No consolation found!—Ah! what to me Availed it that beyond the fields were fair, That sunshine swathed the warm and ambient air, That flowers ambrosial on green banks were blooming, That 'mong the flowers the wanton bees were humming? Or what availed it that the groves still rang With lyrics that the feather lyrists sang? Or what availed it that the meadow-streams. Like naiads, sported 'neath the golden gleams, That overspread the skies? Oh, not to me 'Twas given the loveliness of life to see! My life was as a dull and stagnant pool; Not now to me was Nature beautiful: My heaven was dark above, and all things fair beneath Seemed but a mask contrived to hide the face of Death.

'Tis not within the power of sensible
Material things to image forth that Hell
On Earth, wherein my spirit had her home;
The thing of wretchedness she had become,
Shut up in slothful shame, Godless, alone,
Without companionship, can be but known
To such as have experienced the wild woes,
The purgatorial agonies that close
Round the dark-visioned atheist. Through much strife
And many sorrows, the swift stream of life,
Fraught with vicissitude for all the sons
Of men, with ever vexed eddies runs

To meet the Ocean of Eternity; But the intensity of misery, The depth of anguish, the unbroken frost Of a congealëd heart, the being lost To consciousness of God alone can feel, Writhing and torn on the revolving wheel Of chaos uncontrolled, wrecked on the sea Of uncreated lawless Destiny.

At length, like one awaking from a sleep Of hideous dreams, I roused me from that deep And terrible stagnation of all thought, That slumber of the intellect, and sought In travel an excitement and escape From haunting grief, if, peradventure, shape Of beauty, yet unseen, might still be found To minister a medicine for the wound 'Neath which my spirit groaned. I visited The solemn shores of storied empires dead, And gorgeous cities of the Continent, And ruins rich in chronicle, and went By vine-clad hills and snowy mountain-scalps, And saw the glittering glaciers of the Alps And the huge Appenines, and fed the eye, In many a classic columned sanctuary, On painting and on sculpture, dreams sublime By genius realized, defying Time And rude detraction e'er to uncreate: On all that Europe holds of fair or great I gazed; down rushing rivers sailed that tone Their roar of endless waters, the deep Rhone, The rolling Danube, the majestic Rhine, And Arno, of all radiant streams that shine And glisten 'neath Italian skies, most bright: But vain the looking forward for Delight To enter the hoar cavern of the heart. Widowed of all but Woe. Nor human art, Nor relies of forgotten years, nor aught, With loveliness, romance or grandeur fraught, Could, of this charnel-home of dust inurned, A festal palace make. And when returned, After long years, the vessel touched the shore, That bore me home, no load my lengthened tour Had lightened, but I landed heavier hearted, And a forlorner man than when I started.

Oh! then I longed for Death, yet dared not die;
To quit this unillumined shrine; to fly
This lampless prison of the sense; to drink
Oblivion to the very dregs, and sink
Drowned in Eternal Lethe's silent flood.
And many a time upon the brink I stood
About to plunge, but that the chasm below
Seemed peopled as by shapes of more than woe,
Life's phantom-images made real, the scene
Of Earth's vain tragedy described again
In form and colours more distinct;—the leap
Were easy if to never-ending sleep;
What if Mortality but oped the portal
That led from life to life, and Being were immortal?

And yet I longed for Death, and many a day In village churchyards was I wont to stray, 'Mong names and epitaphs in mournful quest Seeking I knew not what; dreaming of rest For this unquiet heart and brain.—

There lies
In Cambrian vale, all open to the skies,
A small sequestered, peaceful burying ground
Oft visited by me; and there I found,
Upon a sudden, such a peace as made
My life no more a burden, that conveyed
As 'twere a seraph whisper to the ear,
A lightning revelation rendering clear
And bright the unintelligible cloud
Of doubt and anguish, tearing off the shroud
Of grief that wrapt the living soul; a Peace,
A calm, like that which drops upon the seas
No longer by the storm's spent tury driven,
Soothing and deep, like God's voice out of Heaven.

'Twas an Autumnal eve, the skies were flushed With gorgeous sunset, and the winds were hushed That the dead leaves scarce stirred, and such as fell Pattering upon the ground were audible; A rich, and warm, and purple hue o'erspread The atmosphere around, and seemed to shed A melting warmth into the breast, subdued By silence into tenderness. I stood Beside a nameless grave, watching afar

The twilight coming down and a faint star Emerging through the East; when a low sigh, And then brief words uttered resignedly. "O Father, not my will but thine be done," Startled the solitude and me. Alone, Fair as a sculptured shape, with clasped hands And spiritual eyes, whose gaze to lands Beyond the visual ken appeared to roam Through tears, a maiden knelt beside a tomb: Her beauty, in all lands where I had been, By any face or form that I had seen Unequalled; oh! it touched a silver string Long silent in my breast; awoke a spring Long dead within my wintry heart, and brought To life again, of feelings and of thought, A train long vanished; memories recalled Of youth and joy, ere any cloud appalled The morning sun of Hope; till like an Ocean Bursting its bounds, that rush of wild emotion, That flooding tide of re-awakened years, O'erwhelmed the sense, and my reluctant tears Came gushing from their fountains in full crowd, And the strong man was bowed, and wept, and groaned aloud.

Angel of consolation! thou didst glide At that same moment to the stranger's side, And thy words fell upon me, like moist showers, Of freshening rain on parched and thirsting flowers, Calming the aching tumult of my brain. As the soft Moonlight drops upon the main, On balmy summer nights, and crests the waves With her pure liquid luminous beams, and laves Wide Ocean in white splendour; so thy bright Pure-visaged thought, athwart my mind, a light From Heaven did radiate, a light pursuing Mid the heart's crannies its own way, renewing And warming into bloom the faded blossom, And making Spring-tide of the frozen bosom. It came like a sweet lulling wind, and swaying The spirit like a forest bough, and saying,— "O man of sorrow! why this bitterness Of uncontrolled grief? No wilderness, Though e'er so bleak, is altogether waste, But still it hath some sweet verdurous isle of rest.

Some green and flowery place; and in thy breast, (Ah, give thy spirit wings to search it round!) There still abides some fertile nook of ground. That only waits the sun to leap and dance. With flower and leaf, in rich luxuriance; Oh, let the genial sunshine in! Our God. Who clothes with beauty even the grave-vard sod. Will never leave the heart of man all dry And void of sustenance. It grows hard by Thy steps where'er thou wanderest through the land, And thou hast but to reach the willing hand, To pluck and eat the luscious fruit. Lift up Thy head in trustful prayer! The very cup Of grief that now is thine, and bitterer far, Did not escape the lips of Him whom star And world and sea obey; His sympathies Attend our every pang. Oh, turn thine eyes In Faith upon the Saviour! and thy woes, Like clouds that vanish when the South Wind blows, Shall all disperse; and in thy breast a joy Shall reign, like a throned planet in the sky, Robed with the glory of Eternity!"

Those words like wingëd music, came and lay, Like doves with folded pinions, on my heart; And all the mists and vapours cleared away That dimmed my mental gaze, cloven by the dart Of that fair archer. All was now revealed, That once had lain obscure upon the field Of traversed Time; and I beheld at last, In all its naked guilt, the evil Past; Beheld how grief from guilt had grown, a vile And poisonous weed out of its natural soil; 'Twas guilt had marred the heart, or never sorrow Had to the day of boyhood made a morrow Of such despair and dread. Hence sprang the pleasure That to bewitching and unhallowed measure Had set the pulses dancing; hence the light That led astray mid mazes of delight, Then left me, lone and lost, in utter night; And hence the unmitigated cloud of Doubt That over-canopied the tent of Thought. Yea, all was manifest; the errant Pride, The earth-born Passion that had served to guide, Twin servitors of Sin, my steps afar

From Peace and God: Illumined by the star Of Truth, that now victoriously ascended My better firmament, repentance blended With the beginnings of a nobler joy, Suffused my soul; she turned her gazing eye Of trustful supplication unto Heaven, And, fluttering, sighed and prayed to be forgiven.

Out of the Valley of the Shade of Death Emerged into the Morning-land of Faith, A realm embowered in unbounded calm, And echoing ever to the rolling psalm, Chanted by angels in the ear of Him Who sits enthroned amid the seraphim, O'er the wide prospect with delighted eves I ranged: the azure sun-illumined skies On one extended plain looked down, a plain Of light, a sea of flowers, a living main Surging with bud and blade and leaf and bloom. There golden meads lav drowsed in soft perfume, And watered by one pure and crystal river, For ever flowing and melodious ever, Rilling from under amaranthine bowers, Where spirits breathing other life than ours, White-robed and glory-crowned, an endless throng, Walked warbling measures of rejoicing song.

Oh! I am happy now; my soul at rest, Like an unruffled sea, upon whose breast Fair Argosies are floating to a haven Cradled in light, thoughts that glide on to Heaven Urged by the zephyr-wingëd breath of Prayer. I have a golden islet-dwelling there. A home of bliss, embosomed in a realm Of endless summer. Piloting the helm Of my Thought-eager bark is Love, a Power, A shape unlike that spirit, who before Had stolen the guise of Love to lead astrav The unwary boy; but passionless: a ray Divine; a light, the essence of a beam: A pure ecstatic trance, and vet no dream; A wingless glory on the dazzling sea; A hope, a life, an Immortality. And in the bark with me, neath Love the pilot, O'er Life's Egean to our Heaven-home islet Sailing, she sits that woman angel-hearted,

Beneath whose words my buried soul upstarted, Like a reviving corpse from the cold sod, To find a Heaven, a Saviour and a God.

So heart to heart may Love on Earth still bind us, And when Death speeds his message may he find us Yet one in God: and like two married lights, Ensphered within the sky of warm delights, Starring Eternity, at length may we Range the unending dawn of God's felicity, And swell, triumphant 'mong the hosts of Heaven, The chorus of the archangelic seven.

ON THE WAVES.

It is midnight on the waters, and our boat is dancing free On the waves, that murmur music of a magic minstrelsy;

Melodies that stir the spirit with emotions strange and wild; Far off echoes, by the the hand of Time, from angel harps beguiled.

And the heavens above us bending, swathed with splendour, starred with light,

Stand revealed, arrayed in all the mystic glory of the Night,

Everlasting mirror of the Omnipresent's beauteous face, He who holds in arms of love the slumbering world in soft embrace.

Dreams come stealing o'er the mind, and fair imaginations throng

The brain, and smite the chords of life, and wake the heart to utter song.

Dies away each doubtful mood, and every memory of ill, Worldly care, and hateful passion; and the soul subdued and still,

Gazes on the glorious midnight, with a reverential eye, On the white moon-crested waters, on the star-illumined sky;

Lost in awe and adoration of the Parent Soul above, Melted into tears of bliss, and modulated into Love. Lay thy head upon my breast, and let me clasp thy hand in mine.

And drink in the mighty raptures of this moment's bliss divine.

Idly shall our oars repose, and we will rest upon the wave, While to Love's sweet sway each heart be rendered a devoted slave.

Love alone is lord of life; 'tis love alone can reign by right, Though his rule be disregarded, though the world his sceptre slight.

Fettered close in chains of custom, iron bondage of the heart, Grovelling in base Mammon-worship, slavery of the shop and mart.

Yet is Love a regal spirit, and in loving hearts like our's, He hath many affluent kingdoms, palaces, and royal bowers,

Kingly homes, where oft in state, he at the luscious banquet sips

Richest nectar, hived in kisses upon tender lover's lips.

Oh thou dear large-hearted woman, truest lover, fondest wife! Not on gilded trinkets of the world itis ours to lavish life.

In affection, costliest bowers of bliss for thee and me abide, Happy in a straw-roofed cot, if still found at each other's side.

What! a tear is in thine eye! I know thy yet unuttered thought,

"Fairest skies are often clouded, sweetest fancies blotted out.

Years that from the future glisten, now so seeming bright and fair,

May to thee and me bring only storms of sorrow and despair.

In this killing crush of life the tenderest hearts are bruised the most,

And the visions of the noble ones of earth are ever crost.

And I shudder with vague terror at the evil that may be.

Ah! how brief are all our dreams! For Death must come to thee and me.

Death that brooks no keen remonstrance, Death that heeds no poet's song,

Cruel to all kind entreaty, slays the gifted, slays the strong;

Bears the soaring sons of genius first away; when thou art gone,

Where will be the dear delight, the promise and the vision?—Flown.

Yet I would not damp thine ardour, but the memory of the Past

Haunts me, like a gloomy vapour, by the future years forecast;

And beneath the glittering vestments of the golden days to come,

Seems to lurk some pregnant horror, some grim spectre of the tomb!"—

Calm thy troublous fancies, dearest! and shake off this aching dread,

And gaze upward at the glorious midnight firmament o'erhead.

We must die thou sayest, but, far beyond those orbs that shine so bright,

Love hath built him up a city, radiant with undying light.

There his undecaying realm is set, and spirits of the free, Through the gates of Death, pass thither, to love everlastingly.

And there thou and I shall wander, clothed in radiance warm and white,

Amid isles of beauty lying in an ocean of delight.

There no shade of sorrow darkens, thither comes no touch of gloom;

Fields of endless green and gardens glowing with immortal bloom,

Bask for ever in the sunshine of our God's benignant ray, Blossoming all o'er with flowers of love, through one eternal day.

There the malice of the world can never reach, nor envy pain The child of genius more, nor torture the o'erwrought and throbbing brain;

There the poet's Heaven is made; and, in that atmosphere of bliss,

Sympathising seraphs smite their harps, and join their songs to his.

Ah! thy tears are dry, and in the lustre of thy liquid look Mirrored shines my hope, as skies are mirrored in a limpid brook. Let whatever may befal us, we will cherish still our love, Knowing we are in the hollow of His hand who reigns above.

Let the Past with all its sorrows only bind us more and more Heart to heart, and waken mightier faith in Him whom we adore.

He who framed you glorious heavens, set in motion youder spheres.

Spread the mighty deep, and holds the sovereign sceptre of the years,

Orders all things well; and He hath set his promise in the sky:

We will trust Him, though the Future yield us sorrows never dry.

Though our highest hopes betray us, and our happiest dreams deceive,

God is Love to all Eternity, and we will still believe!

Still, while life shall round us linger, our harmonious lives shall make

Music, like these midnight waters, living for each other's sake;

With our hope in Heaven, our faces ever turned towards the sky,

We will wander, singing onward, linked together, Thou and I. 1856.

A LOVER'S VISION.

It was the time whereof sweet dreams are made, That in the summer softly preludes night; The day was dying, and the last lingering light Grew deeper purple, melting into shade.

The bee, that to the lily, all the day,
Humm'd like an infant at its mother's breast,
Grew silent, like an infant hushed to rest,
And the dull summer murmurs died away.

Save where the long lank grasses, to and fro,
Waved, whispering to the breeze that swept the stream,
And the sleek ripples, gliding like a dream,
Plash'd gently in their swift and onward flow.

And in a smooth and drowsy undertone,
Dissembling deeper silence, like a voice
That breathes the burden of remember'd joys,
The sweet sad bird of night and love made moan.

And then a silver line of growing light
Swathed all the East, and lovelier than a bride
The moon arose, and in the mournful tide
Mirrored her pure pale features, warm and white.

I sat alone beside the stream, and wove A thousand fancies into one short hour, Of all that was and would be, and the power That bound the soul a captive unto Love.

I marvelled at the ills of Destiny,
And all the fraud and falsehood that had been;
That Love should vary with the varying scene,
And Life be all a mutability.

How that the sneer took refuge in the smile,
And love did lend his mantle unto lies;
How secret scorn laught in love-languid eyes,
And honeyed phrases cloaked the thought of guile.

For Memory overwhelmed me with the Past, Recalling all the bitter tale of wrong; So like a mockery seemed the lone bird's song, I shuddered with strange sadness overcast.

Till o'er the soul a softer feeling crept,
Allaying the fierce tumult of my grief,
And the wild sorrow brought its own relief,
And my tears came upon me and I wept.

Emotions which to tears alone belong,
When the full heart begins to feel again
A touch, a tone of the old boyish strain,
More musical than any measured song;

And Fancy, like Oblivion, wanders wild
Through Life, that ran before the pathway broke
Upon the waste, or any discord woke
Disturbance of the dreamings of the child;

These twined around the heart, and I did seem
To be again the boy, and the pure thought
Gathered, as unto vaster eddies wrought,
And all the spirit circled in a dream.

Sudden awoke a sense within my frame, Dim, vague, uncertain, like the earliest dawn Of Love in the heart, as, on the silence borne, The magic music of a footfall came.

For thou wert there, amid the silent night,
And gazing down with glorious eye and brow
Upon me, oh thou dearest! even as now,
Suffusing all the soul with tenderest light;

A radiant vision of the isles of bliss.—
But oh, than any vision, dearer far!
Apart from me, thou, even as a star,
Awhile did'st stand; then, in one long wild kiss

Of Love, we met embracing; and a thought Did blossom up within thee, like a flower, The large endowment of that generous hour, A little murmur on the silence caught,

And saying;—Oh Beloved! wherefore went
Thy love in anguish from thee? Hath not Peace
Prepared yet other bridal bowers? Oh cease!
Nor lavish life away in lone lament.

Ah! Hast thou suffered? It is well. The Spring In Winter's snowy lap is ever nurst, The mightier transport is not at the first; For how should strength belong to infant wing?

Nor art thou in thy sorrow all alone,
But others too threading the maze of sadness,
And pressing forward unto higher gladness,
Have made a purer life and love their own.

Man was not made for weeping, neither thou A helmless bark to drift adown the stream. Mark how the tides creep forward, and a beam Dawns in the East, and dances round the prow!

Even from the ruined lodges of the Past,
Melodious whispers light along the years;—
The hopes, the burning raptures and the tears,
Like radiant promises of Life forecast;

And wingēd thoughts of noble deed, that came And sat like doves upon the gates of youth, Of high achievement to be wrought for Truth, And the large-handed dower, a poet's fame, These have not vanished all. What though the cloud Hath blackened over sky and moon and star, The mountain peaks still glimmer white afar, And the dawn deepens and may brook no shroud!

Slow change comes creeping up from day to day, And Death is portal-warden of all Birth; But love can never fade from off the Earth; And a great thought shall never die away.

Still as our souls through endless cycles wheel,
And gather height and strength, and grow to more,
Love yields a rarer rapture than before
Nor doth he bear alone a blind ideal.

Ere Form had place in wide immensity,
Ere worlds were made or ever light appeared,
Love had his strong-built citadel upreared,
For God is Love to all eternity.

O blame not Love for Sorrow! Charge not God With failure, though our Life should end in Death! Whence draw we life but of the Eternal Breath? And doth not Love sit guardian on the sod?

And yet, the conscious instinct of the brain
That drives the colder thought of reason home,
Is proof we are not wholly for the tomb,
Is proof hereafter we shall live again.

Oh! what shall be of Love, in that expanse
Of unimagined bliss? To range the spheres,
And glide along the current of the years,
A world of Love disclosed at every glance;

To meet, 'mong all the starry millions there, No touch of scorn, no eye that looks untruth, But the pure glory of Immortal youth, And endless beauty beaming everywhere;

Ah this were Love and Joy indeed! The cup Were all too full. But keep thy spirit pure; For know the promise of thy God is sure, Have faith in Him, Beloved, and look up!

Look up and love! Why dote on friendless fate, And nourish fruitless sorrow in thy breast? In idle sadness lives no real rest. Go, widowed dove, and get thyself a mate! Hast thou no largess left, yet unbestowed?

Oh I will love thee, and will lead thee on,
Across the wild, beyond the purple dawn,
And sit down with thee in the realms of God!

Oh, trust in me, and yield me up thy love!

Thy voice grew faint as with excess of bliss,—
My dream dissolved as broken with a kiss;

And the great morning gathered light above.

1854.

THE MILLER'S MAID.*

A FIRESIDE RHYME.

What cannot Woman's courage dare
When put to proof by sternest need?
The dauntless heart, the high resolve,
The strong and spirit-stirring deed
To her, as well as man, belong;
Oh, call not Woman weak and frail!
For she hath oft, in peril's hour,
Stood firm, where many a man would fail.

O ye, who take delight in deeds
Of valour and whose hearts are warmed
At tales of human courage, hear
What a weak woman once performed!
A tale, 'twas told me years ago,
While rang the convent's peaceful chime,
As down the Rhine at eve I sailed,
And I have thrown it into rhyme.

From Alpine summits, grand and high,
The rushing river bounds along,
Amid the merry mountain land,
That echoes with his ceaseless song;
By vine clad hill, and castled crag.

And town, it wanders wild with glee,
And through the level meads that reach
For leagues towards the lonely sea.

^{*} The prose original of this legend is to be found in "Legends of the Rhine," by Joseph Snowe, Esq., two vols. London, F. C. Westley.

But half a league from yonder bank,
With gray church tower and cottage white,
Reposing 'mong the meadows green,
The little village peeps in sight,
And near a solitary mill,
That courts the wanderer's curious gaze,

As, idly lingering on his way,

He learns the legend of the place.

From Hersel church at early morn
The Sabbath bells began to peal,
And in their Sunday's best arrayed
Repair the dwellers at the mill;
The miller, with his family,
Repairs betime to holy mass,

Leaving at home, sole guardians there,
His youngest child and servant lass.

Now Haanchen loved a graceless youth,
The byword of the neighbours round;
Was e'er a riot, brawl, or fight,
Sure there was idle Heinrich found:
The miller liked him not, refused
Him entrance ever at his door;
His ill name followed him about,
Yet Haanchen loved him but the more.

Though grieving o'er his many faults,
And shedding oftimes secret tears,
Yet deemed she his the freaks of youth
And that the lad would mend with years;
Whate'er the prattling neighbours said,
Still Haanchen deemed his heart was good,
And that there only needed time,
A riper age, to cool his blood.

And now, her heart with Heinrich full,
She sets about her household cares,
Against the family's return
The Sabbath noon-tide meal prepares.
Thus busy, an approaching step
She thinks she hears, or seems to hear,
And turning to the open door,—
Lo! idle Heinrich standing there.

"Good morrow! lass!" with a half smile,
Half sneer of welcome spake the boor,
"The ugly miller wots not now
That Heinrich stands beside his door;

Betide him ill!"—and entering then He dropt into the nearest seat,

While Haanchen paused amid her task, And spread before him food to eat.

Then sitting down beside him, asked
And told the news, and bade him rest,
Full half-an-hour her gossip ran
With banter and good-natured jest;
Just then he dropt upon the floor
His knife, and bade her pick it up;
"Nay, lad, for thou hast less of work,
And ill shouldst bid a woman stoop."

She laughing spake, nor yet refused,
But stooped to reach it. Quick as thought,
The treacherous boor leapt from his seat,
And grasped her tightly by the throat;
Then drew a murderous weapon forth,
The metal glittered bright and cold!—
"Now, Haanchen! choose, or lose your life,
Or tell me, where's your master's gold?"

Awhile disarmed of all her mind,
She vainly struggled to get free,
His grip was firm, his purpose fixed,
Decided in his villany;
When lo! upon her frighted brain,
A thought came gushing like a rill,
Gave courage to her woman's heart,
And vigour to her woman's will.

"Nay, Heinrich! grasp me not so hard,
But loose a little while your hold,
Release me, you shall have your wish,
I'll show you where's the master's gold;
But you must take me with you hence,
This is no more for me the place,
I could not wait the ruin wrought,
I could not meet the miller's face."

Pleased thus so easy to obtain

His object, he released the maid,
Returned the weapon to his breast,

And followed as she lightly led,
Along a flight of oaken stairs,

To where at night the miller slept,
And in the chamber corner showed

The chest, in which the gold was kept.

"There, take the gold," she said, "while I
Collect my things to take away,
For I must leave the mill with you,
Your theft forbids my further stay."
He heard her trip away, her steps
Resounded from the creaking floor
And upper stairs, but back she stole
And noiseless closed the chamber door.

And while he counted o'er the gold,
She turned the key upon him there,
And left him like a bird entrapped,
Caught in the fowler's dexterous snare;
Then swift dispatched the urchin young,
To tell the tidings of the deed
At Hersel, in his father's ear,
And bid the miller home with speed.

With eager gaze she watched his flight,
As bravely o'er the fields he sped,
And urged him onward with her voice,
Until the ruffian overhead,
Suspicious at her absence grown,
Discovered all the snare, and wide
The chamber casement open flung,
Leaned from the ledge, and loudly cried,—

"Deither, Halloo! she's locked me in;
Haste and secure that urchin there;
Lose not a moment; I've the gold;
But come and kill the woman here,
And set me free!" By this, the child
Three fields had crost, and Hersel town
Was full in view, its church-tower gray,
And whitened cots with roofs of brown,

She heeded not the villain's voice.

Unharmed the child still forward pressed,
When lo! a man from ambush sprang,
And seized him rudely round the waist,
And strode towards the mill. Her heart
A moment failed her, but no more;
Still hoping that relief might come,
She closely barred the outer door:

And to an upper chamber ran,
Where down she sat in mood perplexed,
Uncertain what to do were best,
What stratagem might serve her next.
The ruffian Diether, hastening fast,
Enraged, the mill had reached at length,
And battered at the outer door,
That stoutly baffled all his strength.

She heard him but she heeded not,
Secure beyond his harmful reach,
Her only fear was for the child,
Of whom he talked in murderous speech,
(With oaths and curses intermixed,)
And swore the helpless babe to kill,
Unless she yielded to his threats,
And o'er her head to fire the mill.

She heard him but she heeded not,
No fear could bend her hardy will;
"There is a stronger One than thou,
His power divine shall guard the mill:
His hand shall save yon weeping child;
I fear thee not, thou man of blood!"
Her answer echoed from above,—
"My hope and trust are placed in God."

Right, noble Haanchen! is thy speech,
And well and wisely hast thou said,
Who rest reliance upon Him,
Their trust shall never be betrayed.
Thy God beholds thee, still endure
With patience, He shall bare his arm,
Exert his might, confound thy foes,
And save thee from impending harm.

Exasperate, the infuriate wretch
Bound with strong cords the child, and sought
For some combustibles around,
To carry out his evil thought;
When, lo! his eager eye espied
An aperture before unseen,
Affording ingress to the mill,
And clambering up, he entered in.

Meanwhile, in anxious mind involved,
The maid, bewildered, knew not where
To fix her thoughts; upon her knees
She fell, entreating Heaven in prayer,
Enquiring how she next should act;
Nor did she pray and plead in vain;
A sudden strange and happy thought
Darted like light across her brain.

"It is the Sabbath morn," she said,
"Nor works the mill to-day; should I
Set the mill-gear at work, afar
Some neighbour haply may espy,
And, wondering at the unwonted sight,
Will surely hasten to the spot,
And all will yet be well; indeed,
"Tis God himself hath given the thought."

Quick as the thought, she hastened down,
With this new purpose in her mind;
"Twas soon achieved; just then the breeze
Up sprang, the sails whirled in the wind;
And the great wheel spun round and round,
The smaller gear, with creak and jerk,
Performed their motions, and, behold!
The enormous engine in full work.

Twas at that moment, clambering up,
That Diether's entrance of the mill
Was made; the unguarded aperture
Communicated with the wheel;
Within the drum he had lodged, when, lo!
His blood was chilled with wild affright,
At the swift motion of the wheel,
That bore him round in rapid flight.

He shrieked, he cursed, and vain implored Release, and swore no further harm To do, would she but stop the mill,—
But Haanchen held her purpose firm,
And round and round in rapid flight,
Still spun the great wheel as before,
The villain with it, till he sank

In dizzy swoon, and felt no more.

And still the ruffian's senseless form
The engine with its motion bore,
As, round and round in rapid flight,
Still spun the great wheel as before;
And soon the miller hastened home,
His neighbours with him, much surprised,
Because the mill was in full sail,
And all as Haanchen had surmised.

Soon all was told, the men secured,
And under escort borne away;
They paid the forfeit of their lives
For the dark crime they wrought that day.
Haanchen, the love she once had borne
For Heinrich, to a better one
Transferred, and ere a year had flown
Was married to the miller's son.

All this was ages long ago;
Long generations since have flown,
And in the churchyard Haanchen's name
Has perished from the mouldering stone;
The mill, sole relic of the past,
Her best memorial, still is there;
And there the story still is told,
Of what a woman's heart can dare.
1856.

A MORNING IN AUTUMN.

It was a ripe and sultry Autumn morn,
Voluptuous murmurs all the air beguiled,
And far away, upon the uplands piled,
G listened the bending sheaves of golden corn.

Between its banks flowed cool the lazy stream,
Broad leaves of burdock drooped on either side,
And languid overhung the freshening tide,
And leaned upon the waters drowsed in dream.

Upon the slopes the happy reapers throng, Half unattired, and busied with their toil, And, ever and anon, the hours beguile With many a tuneful snatch of peasant song.

Fair orchards, couched in many a warm retreat, With rich profusion court the ripening ray, Extend their laden branches, and display The clustered fruitage purpling with the heat.

There came a man of griefs and many years,
He sat him down upon the river-side,
And watched the waters of the silent tide
With deep and earnest eyes, suffused with tears.

That morn amid the woodlands had he been, Beheld the leaves upon the yellow wane,— The fading grandeur of the Old Year's reign, Ere Winter comes and closes up the scene.

He marked those gorgeous sheaves of corn up-piled, Beheld those spreading orchards, heard that song, Which the glad reapers in their mirth prolong, But he beheld and listened unbeguiled.

Memory is busy, in that old man's brain,
With visions and with landscapes of the Past;
And long-forgotten feelings, thronging fast,
For him recal the page of life again.

He had exulted once; he too had seen
His glories, even as that Autumnal day;
Those splendours,—his had been as rich as they;
But save to Memory, where was what had been?

Love and Ambition, when his dream was young
And life was supple-sinewed, unto him
Had been the twin and starry seraphim
Who all his heart absorbed, and made him strong

To do and dare and grapple in the strife
That mocks our futile quest of earthly bliss;
Well had he striven, and triumph had been his,
And with it all the emptiness of life.

The morning of his days gave back a dream,
A tender vision of immortal eyes
From out the Past, like stars of Paradise,
And wild Emotions woke by Love's young beam,

Like melodies from Memnon's harp of old;
That was his noblest triumph, but how brief!
His glory turned to woe, his gladness grief,
His dream is buried underneath the mould.

And high had been his aims, his views profound; Alas! his schemes matured but to decay. As o'er-ripe fruits fall from their stems away, Ungathered lie and rot into the ground.

Yet many a glorious garland round his brow Had Fame entwined, and Him applause had crowned; But flown are Fame's delights when Fame is found, And what to him is adulation now?

Oftimes he took delight in Friendship's bower, With fond associates held discourse sublime; Alas! for Friendship is as false as Time And friends fly from us with the flying hour.

Yet was there one he prized above the rest;

A love it was through ten sweet years prolonged;

In fancied wrong, that friend his friendship wronged,
And tore himself, for ever, from his breast.

These recollections o'er that man of years

Come thronging, like old phantoms from the tomb;

The flowers of Spring in Autumn fruits re-bloom,

Hath he no fruits of Autumn but his tears?

And is it then for nought that he hath striven?

For nought hath trod this thorny pilgrimage?

Lies the result of life in tears of Age?

Ah no! Beyond us gleam the fields of Heaven.

Mark, as the sun his high meridian gains,
That aged man departs with upturned eye,
Calmed are his sorrows and his tears are dry,
Though all his dreams are vanished, Heaven remains!

1855.

LAMENT OF AN OLD MAN.

I am old and sad and grey,

And many a weary day

I have walked the world in sorrow for my dear ones passed away;

And my heart is winter cold, For Love's dear days of gold,

And the sunny summertime of life I ne'er more shall behold,

When thou didst make an Eden of my manhood, Isabel!

Ere my breast was full of care,

Ere, like a grim despair,

This unbefriended, hapless, lorn old age sat freezing there;
When I deemed that Time no wrong

Could do, but, ever young,

My soul should thread the bowers of Love singing the selfsame song,

And the burden of that measure should be thy name, Isabel!

Even still in Memory, Those features I can see,

As on that happy Sabbath-eve thine eyes were fixed on me,

When beside the bridge we stood, And the heavens with love o'erflowed.

And we murmured out our vows together in the ear of God, And they beam with love, as then they beamed upon me, Isabel!

Though many sought thy hand, Who riches could command,

A simple poet's heart to thee was more than house or land;

Though the squire could not brook, That his daughter deigned to look

With favour on the orphan-lad who dwelt beside the brook, Thou didst not scorn to share my lowly cottage, Isabel!

> And when one day 'twas said, That on a fevered bed,

And watched alone by strangers, delirious I was laid;
Though thy sire in wrathful pride,

When thou askedst to come denied,

Thou brav'dst his ire devotedly and hastenedst to my side, And tendedst me in sickness, my faithful Isabel;

And when I left my bed,

What prayers by thee were made

To thy father, till his heart was melted towards me, and he said,

That he long had been too hard In witholding his regard,

That he knew thy heart was mine, and he bade me gently guard

The treasure I had won, my pure and peerless Isabel!

It was on an Autumn day,

And the cornfields glistened gay,

And the purple fruit hung clustering when from thy home away,

I bore thee forth a bride, Across the cornfields wide,

And carelessly along the grave-strewn churchyard's sunniest side;—

The sun shines there upon thy grave, to-day, my Isabel!

Seven Springs came budding forth, Seven Autumns strewed the Earth

With plenty, seven Winters thou didst glad my cottage hearth;

Two smiling babes you bore me, And then you went before me,

So you said upon your death-bed, to a home of endless glory;

Seven years of love, and then the angels took you, Isabel!

I did not shriek or rave

When they laid you in the grave,

I scarcely wept, though all my heart was like a pent-up wave,

But I calmed the inward strife, Though the glory from my life

With thee departed hence, my beautiful and angel wife!

And the cloud and shadow darkened round my fireside,

Isabel!

I conquered my despair,

For the sweet and smiling pair,

The infant legacy you left demanded all my care;

For them, with anxious heart, I sought the busy mart.

And toiled for gold, and changed the poet's for the trader's

And Fortune's gifts were showered down upon me, Isabel!

O labour spent in vain, O fruitless toil for gain,

The freezing blight of sickness nipt my darling blossoms twain:

The fever in one day Bore both my buds away,

To bloom with thee in Paradise beneath the Eternal ray; They slumber with thee in the village churchyard, Isabel!

Though wealth be mine, 'tis vain;
Though men in greed of gain
Misdeem me happy, I would lavish all but to obtain

One glimpse of those in Heaven, My dear ones early riven;

Oh! better far to me, than all the wealth and honour given, One smile of thine, from out thine Eden-home, dear Isabel!

> I am old and sad and grey, And many a weary day

I have walked the world in sorrow for my dear ones passed away;

In my loneliness I pine For that dear life of thine;

Blessed be God! though desolate, one bright hope still is mine.

Life wanes apace, we soon shall meet in Heaven, my Isabel! 1857.

THE LADY ALICE FLEMING.

In the twilight cool and shady,
At the casement sat the Lady
Alice Fleming, while the silver
Crescent gathered light above;
Partly joying, partly grieving,
Sat she sighing, fondly weaving
Many strange and subtle fancies
Shadowed of the soul of love.

Lady Alice, few have seen her But have marked her high demeanour, Graceful, yet with all the pride Of those whom they call nobly born; And her beauty, pale pure features, Such as only prouder natures Boast, close-chiselled like a saint's, And lips the very type of scorn.

Not an hour had yet passed over,
Since a brave and noble lover,
Kneeling at her feet, had taken
Her white hand within his own:
And, in words of tender wooing,
Told her of his heart's undoing,
Bade her take it to her keeping,
And to rule it like a throne.

With the fringes of the curtain
Lightly playing, as uncertain
Of the purport of his words,
The Lady half inclined her head,
With her large eyes fixed upon him,
Silent and unmoved, so won him
Of his secret soul, then proudly
Rose up like a queen and said:—

Sir, I thank you for your wooing,
And deplore your heart's undoing,
Much I pity you, and if
I could a kindred love would learn;
Sorry am I, sir, to grieve you,
But not loving can but leave you,
And I trust, where next you love,
Your love may win a kind return.

So she chilled his love and left him,
And her bitter words bereft him
Of the hope of months, he staggered
Half bewildered to depart;
While above him, silver-shrilling,
Rose light peals of laughter, trilling
Through the place, their echoes sank
Like venomed arrows in his heart.

In the twilight cool and shady,
At the casement sat the Lady
Alice Fleming, while the silver
Crescent gathered light above;

Partly joying, partly grieving,
Sat she sighing, fondly weaving
Many strange and subtle fancies
Shadowed of the soul of love.

And he loves me, sighed the Lady.

And I chilled his love and said he
Could not teach me kindred passion,
All the while I loved him well;

And I fondly thought to pride me
In my scorn, while he, beside me,
Wasted out his soul in anguish,
Ah! that he were here to tell

Once again his deep devotion;
Then I think some kind emotion
Might o'ermaster pride within me,
And I would not scorn him then;
For I'd tell him how I love him,
And these eyes should doat above him,
And these lips on his should nestle,
And he should not plead in vain.

Starts she, for her dream is broken,
His the whisper, his the token
That her scorn is all forgiven,
And his sorrow laid at rest;
Dearest, said she, do not chide me!—
And she kissed him,—let me hide me
These warm blushes,—and she weeping
Laid her head upon his breast.

1853.

THE BALLAD OF THE WHITE STEED.

Through the glen she came riding upon her white steed, That brake down the bulrush and trampled the reed, Behind her he rode on a mare black as doom, And her favour he wore in his cap, for a plume;

And "follow! tollow! follow!" she cried.—
"Wheresoe'er thou dost ride,

I follow the flying white steed," he replied.

To a valley of roses they presently came, That glowed with the thick blooms, all crimson aflame; She burst through the hedgerow, and swept down the dale, Drinking in the rich fragrance that loaded the gale;

And "follow! follow!" she cried .--

"Wheresoe'er thou dost ride,

I follow the flying white steed," he replied.

A turbulent river their onward course stayed,
The voice of whose wave sounded weird mid the glade,
As it gurgled and frothed in the sun's yellow gleam;
She plunged in the waters and swam the wild stream;
And "follow! follow! she cried.—

and "follow! follow! follow! she cried.

"Wheresoe'er thou dost ride, I follow the flying white steed," he replied.

The farther shore gained, she fleets o'er the bald plain, While a swift angry storm gathers round her amain, The wind shrieks; the blue lightnings flash fierce on her

Through the drenching rain bellows the thunder in wrath;
And "follow! follow! follow!" she cried.—

"Wheresoe'er thou dost ride.

I follow the flying white steed," he replied.

They come to the mountains. The rocks form a chasm. The courser uprears, as convulsed by a spasm, Ere he dares the dread leap. Will they clear it or miss? Great Heaven! She is lost in the yawning abyss;

And "follow! follow! follow!" she cried.—

"Wheresoe'er thou dost ride,

I follow the flying white steed," he replied. 1893.

'ANAFKH.

I.

Among the green summer woods with his merry companions he wandered,

A youth with ruddy cheeks and golden curls, like Apollo, And with loud laughing mirth, the echoes of morn they set ringing.

Some the butterflies chased, which, on wings of blue, purple and amber,

Wantoned amid the sunshine; while others roamed, carelessly threading

The interlacing paths, from knoll to knoll joyously skipping, Culling the flowers that hung, in rich and odorous clusters.

Drooping from many a branch, or studded the green turf like jewels.

Many a light-hearted troop that morning was ranging the bowers.

And with their voices startled the mellow thrush in her covert.

Or sent the timid hare, all trembling, affrayed to his burrow.

II.

Chasing one fairy moth, of color surpassing and brilliant,

The youth of whom I speak, his comrades had left at a distance;

And where the wingëd creature upon a large musk-rose alighted,

Which in full blossom floated on the soft breeze its rare fragrance.

Saw he the beauteous maid, whose face and form had been imaged

Oft in his dreams, and for whom among the virgins around him.

Day by day, for long his eye had been eagerly seeking.

She had espied, from afar, the rose with its petals of crimson, And had drawn near to pluck it, to grace a wreath she was twining.

As with a sweet surprise, she glanced when she saw him approaching;

His the familiar features were, her own fancy had pictured; Moved by a sudden impulse, he opened his arms to receive her:

To his embrace she sprang and nestled close to his bosom, While each exclaimed to the other:—"Beloved at length I have found thee!"

III.

Now, through the wood, side by side, as lovers they wandered together;

Keeping close to each other, save when, some bright insect pursuing,

He would dart off for a minute, or she stayed a moment to gather

Some violet, queen-rose or iris to add to the flowers in her garland.

Tall white-blossomed chestnuts and lime boughs made arches

above them,

While in many a bush warbled the blythe-hearted blackbird, Filling all the air with dulcet music to greet them.

Thus the glad hours flew by, their spirits with rapture exulting,

And sweet Love with his spells:—meeting eyes, looks dissolving and tender.

And kisses, dear and delicious—made all an Eden around them.

Sometimes they sat and rested awhile 'neath the o'erhanging branches;

Then again started up, and their pleasant wanderings continued:

But o'er neither brow stole the darkening trace of a shadow, And in neither heart arose one fear or foreboding,

As in each other's love they felt so joyous and happy.

IV.

All at once, before them, through the bowers, from bough to bough flitting,

Fell the youth's eye on a bird of plumage dazzling and wondrous.

While from its golden throat gushed rivers of ravishing music. Leaving his own dear maiden, he followed in chase of the songstress,

With a fond wave of the hand, and a glance, loving and

beaming,

That to her gentle heart gave assurance of speedy returning.

Meanwhile, her onward steps to a turn in the woodways have brought her,

Where, lo! a little path opens out, to her vision disclosing Myriads of choicest blooms, that spread there in lavish profusion.

Seeing the youth still in chase, at a little distance before her, Into the flowery path she turned, for a few flying moments,

From its clustering blossoms to add to her beautiful garland. As she advanced, the flowers on each side increased in their beauty.

Deepening in richness of hue and enlarging the size of their petals.

So was her spirit filled with admiring sense of their beauty,

That she unconscious advanced beyond where her first thought had intended.

Suddenly she remembered:—"My lover by this hath returned.

And in the spot where he left me is anxiously seeking his maiden."

Then she began to retrace her steps, but dismayed she discovered

That she had passed unnoticed a hundred paths intertwining, Devious, crossing each other, and all of which opened before her

This one and that she essayed, and essayed still again but all vainly,

Till she found herself lost in that beautiful treacherous labyrinth,

And sitting down on a mound, with saddened, disconsolate spirit,

Filled all the echoes around with the sound of her passionate sobbings.

V.

Thus with the maid.—But the youth in pursuit of the bird had pressed onward.

Far, far away had it lured him, now for a moment alighting, Then as he neared it, still flying a little farther beyond him, And so alighting again, and warbling its wild witching measure.

Thus had it led him on, till he came to the verge of the

There a wide meadow lay outspread in billowy beauty.

Waving with grass and myriads of blossoms of amber and purple

Crimson and gold, and crossed by a path that led on to a mountain.

Crowning the brow of the mountain arose a thick grove of tall pine-trees,

And from their midst peeping out, he espied a noble pavilion, With balustrades and domes that gleamed in the sunlight all golden.

VI.

Onward the bird still led him and soon he had crossed the wide meadow,

And ascending the mountain he saw in the pine grove above him,

Moving among the trees, and in and out the pavilion,

Shapes of radiant glory, wingëd and crowned like the angels, Clad in long white robes, that shone like the light of the morning.

So did the sight enchant him, he gave not a thought to the

maiden,

Now so far behind, in the woodland left sobbing and lonely; All his thought to press onward and learn what might be this pavilion,

And these wondrous forms on the summit that dazzled his

vision

At length, the height he gained; but flown was the bird

which allured him,

And in a moment, the shapes of light and the radiant pavilien Vanished all; and lo! alone 'neath the shadowing pine-trees, Stood he, and heard the shrill wind which whistling swept over the mountain.

Then he bethought him of her he had left away in the woodland

And would have hastened back, but that some invisible power,

Power he could not resist, impelled him with footsteps

reluctant.

Onward still, to descend the other side of the mountain.

VII

Meanwhile, the maid in the forest, still sat sighing and sobbing,

Saying: - "O Beloved, I nevermore shall behold thee.

Would in pursuit of the bird, that I thy footsteps had followed,

Nor turned aside from the path to gather these treacherous blossoms.

Surely my lover is seeking me now, and mourning in anguish, Filled with reproachful thoughts of my seeming faithless desertion."—

While thus she sighed and bewailed, her bosom heavy with sorrow,

Came an angel of light, with pitiful eyes looking on her,

And speaking in tender tones:—"O maiden, so hapless and lonely!

Wouldst thou again behold thy lover? To him will I lead thee,

Rise up and follow!" So, she arose and followed the angel,

Followed him through the wood, followed him speechless and silent,

For her heart was too full of amaze to allow of her speaking. Many a winding way and intricate turning they threaded.

Till, the trees left behind, they came on a land waste and barren,

Crowded with thorns and brakes, and abounding in treacherous hollows.

And morasses where croaked the lizard and shrieked the wild bittern.

And the sorrowful curlew sent forth the cry of loud wailing. But across the waste, her angel-guide led her in safety,

And their way lay now, through a silent and beautiful valley; Silent, save that here and there, the lambkins were bleating, And that adown the vale, a brook with its tinkling murmur,

Made a joyous music as over the pebbles it rippled. On either side arose, for walls, the sheltering mountains,

Clad with verdure and touching the low-hanging clouds with their summits.

While far away, before her, gleamed a bright river of water, And it seemed, that thither the angel was leading her onward.

VIII.

By the weird power impelled, the youth had descended the mountain,

With his heart ready to break, torn by a tempest of sorrow. At the base of the hill, he came on the marge of a river,

Broad, that its opposite shore was but dimly seen in the distance.

Near him a boat lay moored, to a stake in the river bank fastened;

In it an old man sat, with locks all grizzled and hoary,

Gazing down into the stream with sad eyes, on his oars as he rested.

Suddenly looking round, the youth beheld fast approaching, Led by her angel-guide, his own and beautiful maiden.

She saw him and flew to embrace him, and flinging his glad arms around her.

High beat his heart, as he folded her, fondly, once more to his bosom.

Then as each other's faces they scanned, the traces of sorrow Saw they in each. but felt amends in that moment of rapture, For all the grief they had suffered and in one breath they cried:—"Nothing

Ever shall sever us more, or lure us away from each other."

Ah! deceiving thought! Not so had Destiny willed it.

Gently the angel unwound their arms, and back from her lover.

Drew the form of the maiden; while the invisible power Urged the youth to the boat. One sweet sad smile, as he entered,

Cast he upon the maid, and then the grizzly-haired boatman Loosed the bark from its moorings, and dipping his oars in the water

Rapidly rowed across to that dim shore in the distance; While the maid stood on the bank, with wistful eyes gazing after,

Wringing her hands and weeping, as hope died away in her bosom.

1868.

A DREAM OF THE SINLESS WORLD.

A May-day, such as in our colder clime
But seldom dawns, burst through the golden gate
Of morning, and leapt forward to its prime

Of glory, swathing all the bowers that late Had drunk the dews of the dusk eventime; And every waking bird sang to his mate,

Expectant of a day of Jubilee:
And like a frolic child the breeze arose,
Scattering warm fragrance from each blossomed tree

And garden-plots of musk, and thyme, and rose And climbing honeysuckle. The clear and tender Radiance of that sweet morning thawed the snows

Of many cares and sorrows that did render
My heart a winter thing, and a strange gladness
I seemed to gather from the mellow splendour,

A joy that brought oblivion of all sadness, As humming bees get honey from the flowers. And as on men, long held in cells of madness,

When reason dawns, they do forget the hours And days and years of their deep misery, Dreaming delighted in among the bowers, All sounds and all sweet scents that came to me, And all sweet thoughts they brought with them did scare, From halls and chambers of the memory,

The haunting spectres of the Past. And where
These long had made their dwelling, shapes of dream,
All radiant as that radiant morn and fair,

And lovelier far than aught of earth, did seem To lift the veil from the mysterious years And from eternity. Adown the stream

Of thought, a wingëd bark my spirit bears, Past many a faëry field all starred with blooms, Where many a radiant faëry hall uprears

Its golden balustrades and silver domes; And still past many a palace set in light, Of kings and queens of dream the faëry homes.

I cannot tell in speech each wondrous sight, That on the charmed gaze of Reverie Flashed all along that stream's swift eddying flight,

But each immortal in the memory
Has found a niche and made itself a shrine.
But I may tell of wonders that to me

Came, fraught with raptures heavenly and divine, As the wing'd bark smote on a golden shore; And I alighted to behold the shine

Of gleaming garments and of forms that bore A grace surpassing all of earthly mould,
And starry eyes whose glances seemed to dower

The soul with sudden Heaven, and enfold
Its being in an Eden-leash of love:
Unlike our passion here, pure as the cold

White rising April moon beheld above The surface of the waves, but as the sun Mellow and warm, and tender as a dove

That woos his mate amid the woodlands dun.—
Innumerable were they as the grains
Of sand o'er which the white sea waters run

At ebb of tide, or flowers that spring when rains Have moistened the green banks, or stars that gem At eventide the blue ethereal plains. And every one did wear a diadem

Of light upon his brow, whiter than snow,
Or lilies clustered on their threadlike stem,

Or showers of creamy spray, when the winds blow From silver fountains flung. And harps they bore Of magic tone, whence the continuous flow

Of melody, more sweet than strains that pour From throat of leaf-embowered nightingale, Or jubilant lark at morn's half-open door

Raining his notes like showers into the vale

Just waking to the day, with minstrelsy

Did fill the air around. Wondering and pale.

I stood, and gazed as one whom wizardry
Of potent archimage with spells hath bound;
And wonted power of motion seemed to flee

My limbs, as though fast rooted to the ground; So strange to me a child of earth appeared That multitude of forms, that tide of sound

And all that there I felt and saw and heard.

Then one of that bright company came to me,
And spake in tones that all my spirit stirred

With feelings undefined, words that did woo me From that deep trance of wild astonishment, And to her side as in an instant drew me.

It was a woman's form, and her glance went Like summer warmth to the heart's remotest cell; She said, "I have been waiting for thee, sent

"To guide thee through the land, past down and dell, And o'er the ambrosial meads, and through the bowers Hanging luxuriant, past the streams that well

"From the clear springs imbedded among flowers, And onward to the columned citadel, With all its myriad shining domes and towers,

"Where He who sent me reigns. I love thee well, Have ever loved thee, therefore I am come Thy steps to guide, and in thine ears to tell

"Things from thy mind long wrapt in hues of gloom, Beyond a mortal's ken, but now to be Revealed, from thy long wanderings journeyed home, "To go no more for ever; but with me To walk in white and dwell before the Throne, And, mirror-like reflect the purity

"And loveliness of Him that sits thereon, Beside the margin of the Jasper sea, Behind whose waters never sun goes down."

A NIGHT SKETCH.

'Twas night! Upon the bridge she stood, a wreck of womanhood.

Glaring with eye of wild despair upon the darkling flood; The frosty wind blew sharp and chill, the wintry moon gleamed wan,

And through her thinly-covered limbs a curdling shudder ran. She knew, she was a mark of scorn to all who passed her by; She felt upon her heart a weight of leaden agony;

She knew, in all the city round, she had no living friend—No kindly heart to feel for her, no hand its aid to lend.

And yet it was not always thus, there was an olden day, Ere ever sin had flung its spectral shadow o'er her way;

A day when she was young and pure, and full of virgin grace.

And village maidens envied her the beauty of her face;
Then, when they raised the May-pole high and danced upon
the green,

They crowned her with a wreath of flowers, and called her "Village Queen;"

Then not a sorrow wrung her heart, nor care disturbed her brow:

Ah! how unlike the girl of old, you guilty creature now!

Once had a father looked on her with proud, rejoicing eye; Alas! a broken-hearted man he died, and she not by.

Once had a mother's bosom swelled, her budding bloom to view;

Alas! that ere such child was born that mother learned to rue. Once of the happy peasant-home her presence was the light; Alas! on all its peace and joy 'twas hers to bring the blight. Once—But ah! why should happier times come back to memory there,

Standing the fearful wreck she was, alone in her despair?

Another memory crossed her brain: the wretch who wooed to win

Her unsuspecting steps to tread with him the paths of sin.

Where now was he? Ah! climbing high on Fortune's giddy stair;

Honoured and courted by the world, and with no thought of her.

How she had loved him, and, too fond, believed his flattering tongue!

How, when he praised her beauty, on his treacherous words she hung!

She knew him now! and as his face across her vision came, A muttered curse escaped her lips and syllabled his name.

She leapt upon the parapet; one dreadful look she cast Around her, peering through the night, her wildest and her

last;

Then plunged into the stream that rolled, with eddy swift and strong,

Unconscious of the freight it bore, its seaward tide along. Oh! while you shudder at her fate, remember in our land That there are thousands such as she, who need an

outstretched hand

To snatch them from as dire a death, or direr life of shame. Ah! Christians, 'twere a Christ-like work these lost ones to reclaim;

It was to save the wandered sheep, our sinless Shepherd came. 1866.

BY THE RIVER.

In the silent hush of evening, when the Autumn woods were brown,

And the lengthening shades of twilight soberly came creeping down;

While amid the leafy branches rose the nightingale's rich lay,

Like a plaintive passionate requiem, warbled for the dying day;

And the moon with gathering radiance shone reflected in the stream,

Gliding, with its gentle ripple, like the "murmur of a dream," Underneath the trees we wandered, by the margin of the tide,

And I whispered words of feeling to the maiden at my side.

Tenderly she gazed upon me with her bright and beaming eve:

Round her fell her golden tresses, and with voice of melody, Which, to mine that pleaded with her, gave the wished-for answering tone,

Told me that I was beloved, and I knew she was mine own.

And I clasped her to my bosom, and I proudly kissed her lips

Underneath the waving willow, where the bough the water dips:

By the margin of the river, sealed upon her lips our love; Happy were our hearts within us, cloudless was the sky above.

By-and-by we passed a little churchyard on a rising ground, Where the white and streaming moonlight silvered many a narrow mound;

O'er the graves a breeze came stealing, with its calm and cooling breath,

From the ivied tower we heard the passing bell that told of death.

Heard, but scarcely heeded, for the life within our veins was warm.

And the spirit of sweet love around us spread a magic charm; We were dreaming not of death, but sweetest life together

Life a path of fragrant beauty, ne'er by envious clouds o'ercast

In the silent hush of evening, when the snow lay white and still

On the ground, and through the air the wintry wind blew bleak and chill,

By the margin of the river, with a breaking heart, alone

To that burying-ground I wandered, pausing by a carven stone;

O'er that cold slab wildly weeping, for my hopes lay buried there;

Jealous Death had robbed me of my darling of the golden hair;

All the joy, the treasure, erst, that lavish Autumn evening gave,

Death and winter had despoiled, the only relic left,—a grave. 1865.

ATHENORE.

The roselight of life long hath vanished,
The hopes that once thrilled me are banished,
Like birds with the summer departed,

Alas! to return nevermore!

Of the heart's tender blossoms all perished,
But only the memory is cherished.

They lie, like a chaplet that's faded, In the grave with my lost Athenore.

In reverie my spirit retraces,

With saddened remembrance, the places

The green fields and wild forest mazes,
It once was a joy to explore,
When Love filled the firmament o'er us,

And brightened the vista before us,

And a Future all golden seemed beaming For me and my loved Athenore.

Ah well I remember that even,—
The moon as she trod the clear Heaven

Her silver beams shed, while together

We roamed by the sea-beaten shore;

And there in the hearing of ocean, I told her my heart's deep devotion,

And won from her soul its sweet secret,—
The love of mine own Athenore.

Twas then the boon season of summer, Dear time, when the honey-winged hummer

Flies wandering 'mong odorous blossoms,
And gathers their sweetness in store:

When the young lambs are playfully bleating, And the birds, their glad carols repeating,

But ah! not so buoyant and happy As I and my loved Athenore.

But when the year grew grey and sober, And the chill biting blast of October

Came shredding the leaves from the branches,

And shrieking along the dull shore; A shadow of unwelcome seeming

Came clouding the light of our dreaming,

And an hour that witnessed a parting Twixt me and my loved Athenore.

She went with her friends, o'er the waters,
To mingle 'mong Italy's daughters,
She could not but stir them with envy
Of beauty unwitnessed before;
And as slowly the winter-days glided,
Their dull laggard footsteps I chided,
Impatient again for her presence
To glad me, mine own Athenore.

But when for the young Spring's returning,
The fresh budding woodlands were yearning,
How joyously came the sweet missive
That I should behold her once more,
Again in the old woodland places,
So oft that had seen our embraces,
Should meet her and clasp to my bosom
The form of my loved Athenore.

One night I looked out at my casement,
The place rocked from turret to basement,
I saw the sea lashed into tempest,
And heard the storm-wind loudly roar;
I shuddered and prayed God would send her
His angels from Heaven to defend her,
And guard the lone bark, on the waters,
That bore my own loved Athenore.

Was Heaven no longer entreated

By Prayer? or some envious fiend seated,
That night, at the helm of the vessel?
For the wild whelming waters went o'er
The ill fated bark, and with wailing
And agonized shrieks unavailing,
Every soul on board perished, and with them
My darling, my loved Athenore.

The third day the sunbeams were glancing
On waves that leapt, merrily dancing
With shell-tangled weed to the sea-beach,
And one on its breast lightly bore—
(Ah! it knew not with what it was laden!)—
The pale drowned corse of a maiden,
And laid at the feet of her lover
The form of my dead Athenore.

At her grave, amid rites sadly spoken, On her coffin I dropt love's last token,

A rose I had given her, now withered, That once on her bosom she were. Oft I wander there, hearing the surges

Prolong their monotonous dirges,

Like the sighs of a penitent wafted

Like the sighs of a penitent wafted O'er the grave of my lost Athenore.

And at night, in the rainy Decembers, I sit brooding over the embers,

In my chamber and on the red firelight
With steadfast gaze earnestly pore,
Seeking out from its magical faces,
Among them one bearing the traces
Of the features of her who lies buried

Of the features of her who lies buried, My darling, my lost Athenore.

Then it seems that a beautiful vision, Enrobed in white radiance Elysian,

Appears mid the blaze,—tis a maiden
With features the same as of yore,
My lone heart of sadness beguiling,
Upon me in tenderness smiling,

And the silence is broke by a whisper, 'Tis I, thine own loved Athenore.

Oh! would thou wert come blessed maiden!
With the message of death gently laden,
To call me away from this region,
To walk o'er Heaven's hyaline floor,
With thee, in yon Eden for ever,
And know that a cloud shall come never
Again between me and my darling.

My angel, my bride Athenore.

1863.

THE CASTLE ON THE RHINE.

It was a castle on the Rhine;
And from the turret, in the breeze,
A lordly banner waved, whereon did shine
Emblazoned traceries;

From its high nest amid the crags,
It frowned upon the stream below,
A place defying change and time,
In the years long ago.

'Twas then a home of love and mirth;
And the young baron in his pride—
There was no happier man in all the earth—
Embraced his beauteous bride;
They took no heed of envious time,
How should they in their youthful glow?
With loving hearts that beat in tune,
In the years long ago.

There is a ruin on the Rhine;
No banner from the turret streams,
And in those roofless halls no lovers twine
Their garlands of love-dreams;
Only the river murmurs by,
Still with its calm, continuous flow,
The same as when it floated on,
In the years long ago.

1863.



Poems of Religion.

A HYMN.

WAKE, O, my soul! the loud anthem, the tribute of glad adoration,

Joining the song that resounds from the uttermost bounds of creation,

Hymning the praise of Jehovah, His glory and grandeur declaring,

Imaged throughout His wide works—their witness continually bearing;

Hushing to silence the doubt that would question His marvellous Being,

Blending together their voices, in rapturous concord agreeing.

Foremost arises, untiring, the deep-chested music of ocean, Now breathing softly in calm, now heaving with stormy emotion;

Swept by the wings of the tempest, and stirred to tumultuous passion,

Rolling its white surging billows, it tells of the strength that could fashion

Forth its cavernous depths, and fill with the main-flood, and chain it,

E'en as a slave, to His will, Almighty to loose or restrain it.

Lo! where marmoreal clouds are brooding in black heavy masses.

Hiding the peaks of the mountains, and leaning down over the passes;

Dart in and out the wild lightnings, like furies stricken with wonder.

Hark! as, in peal upon peal, vibrates the magnificent thunder; Making the hills to shudder with dread, their foundations to tremble.

Echoing His voice at whose fiat earth's terriblest forces assemble.

Flashing along in her pride glides onward the beautiful river, While on her eddying bosom the white mirrored moon-lustres quiver;

Till, where the deep chasm yawns, her pathway she suddenly

misses,

And, with a headlong plunge, leaps into the awful abysses; Seething among the grey rocks, the voice of the cataract rebounding

Hails God enthroned on the waters, His name on the nightair resounding.

an resounding.

League upon league the dun sands the face of the wilderness cover,

Region of burning drought, that the traveller in dread passes over;

Prone on the ground he falls, for the pitiless simoom hath risen, Scouring the plain, like a furious dragon escaped from its prison.

Hark! to that Name, its wild scream in accents of terror

proclaimeth-

His, who careers on its wings, and its rage, at will stirreth or tameth.

Turning to quieter scenes, where Nature untroubled rejoices, How, to Jehovah, commingling, a choir of melodious voices Rises in praise; from young lambs that, bleating, roam browsing the valleys:

Feathery warblers, whose minstrelsy rings through the green

forest alleys;

Brooklets that tinkle and murmur meandering blythe through the meadows;

Whispering breezes that wake at the touch of the cool evening shadows.

Power Almighty! Thy works throughout Thy dominion proclaim Thee;

Loudly the voices of Nature with various utterance name
Thee;

Ceaselessly Thee they hymn forth, the theme of their mighty rehearsal,

Sire primeval of all things, and Lord of life universal!

Wake, O, my soul! and unite thy song to the song of creation, Honouring God in His works, with the homage of glad adoration.

A CHRISTMAS ODE.

Avaunt, grim-visaged night, Veiling, so long, the light

Of radiant truth, from men, by sin deluded!

Lo! in the East appears The dawn of happier years;

And the black scowling fiend, erewhile that brooded

O'er the worn world, takes wing, Scared by the sounds that ring

From angel-harps, our Prophet's birth-song antheming.

The Light so long foretold By mighty seers, of old,

Darting their gaze down Time's dim avenues,

Hath, like the morning sun,-His golden course begun,-

Brought a new day to men-and healing dews,

Among the nations spread, Their holy influence shed,

And quicken to keen life souls festering mong the dead.

Light of the World! His rays Upon her wondering gaze

Shine forth, the tender love of heaven revealing;

No longer need she grope, Aimless and lorn of hope,

Bewildered in the gloom and vainly feeling

After a Father's hand. Lost in a desolate land,

With no companion voice to cheer her, mild and bland.

Cloven is the awful curse. That o'er the universe

The pall of mourning spread, when the rich glow

Of Eden's bliss was quenched. And earth with tears was drenched,

Filled with remorse for that which wrought her woe:

Now the hushed seraph-strain

Of joy revives again,

Proclaiming that the feud twixt God and man is slain.

The Anarch's reign is o'er, For wounded to the core

His strength lies writhing, like an asp whose sting

Is plucked; and all his horde Of ruffian fiends abhorred,

In terror crouch to see their baffled king Shorn of his pride, his lies

Stripped of their tinsel guise, Driven back to hell, no more on earth to tyrannise.

> Our great Messiah's worth His heralds sally forth

Proclaiming, where the fettered peoples lie

In bondage and in pains; And lo! they burst their chains

And leap into the light of liberty;

While the false idols groan, Their temples overthrown,

And massed in hideous wreck and ruin round them strewn.

All hail, Divine One! sent To orb our firmament

With a new splendour, fairer than the old

O'er Paradise that shone, Ere the fell deed was done.

That brought the darkness with its deadly fold:

Never to fade or fail
Thy glory shall prevail,

Till the whole world, renewed, shall yield Thee rapturous hail! 1875.

THE CRY OF HUMANITY.

Where, in this Age of Doubt, shall we look for the light we are seeking?

Where catch the accents of Truth, in the voices around us breaking?

Torrent of restless voices indistinct and uncertain!

Ah! for one we could trust flung forth from behind the curtain!

Veil of impervious cloud bounding our mortal being,
With its relentless folds forbidding our farther seeing;
Mystery all around us, darkness before us extending,
Instinct within us that yearns for, yet shrinks from a life
unending.

Such is the anguishing cry from a thousand hearts proceeding.

Mazed in the tumult of life, and with wounds from its conflicts bleeding:—

O, my Brothers! the radiant sunlight for which ye are sighing,

O, my brothers! the voice to your anxious doubts replying, Reach you, amid the shadows that round your footsteps darken.

Would ye but open your eyes to see and your ears to harken:

Think ye that God hath left us, bewildered, to grope and gather

Knowledge, as best we may, of ourselves and of Him, our Father?

Deem ye the Father's great heart so void of all fatherly feeling?

Nay! His own voice is heard in the Word of His own revealing:

Go, with believing spirit, and, in its oracular pages, Learn ye the truth that unravels the enigmas of all the ages!

ODE.

BENEATH THE STARS AT MIDNIGHT,

YE hierophants of Night,
Who with continuous rite,
In the vast vaulted firmamental fane,
The Name, the praise declare
Of Him who set you there;
Through timeless age, your witness to maintain
Far as our sight can soar,
'Mong depths that have no shore,
And bid reluctant man His presence to adore.

Upon your countless orbs, With wonder, that absorbs All sense, all soul into itself, I gaze; Till in the mind is wrought

Unfathomable thought

That, reaching out a moment, in amaze To its own fount turns back,

And writhes upon the rack Of conscious impotence those labyrinths to track.

> Tell me, ye Stars! can He, Of whose Infinity,

Of whose eternal essence ve give token, Be or have aught in kind

With this encaged mind? From out your gleaming hosts was ever spoken

The answer we would win. To crush those doubts within

Our breasts that spider-like their coils around us spin?

For ever from the height, Your unquenched steadfast light, The unbeginning, everlasting One

> Proclaims; but ne'er outbrake One ray, the word which spake

To us whose race on earth is swiftly run, With toil and suffering trod,

Soon sleeping 'neath the sod, "Ye are not of the dust, born heritors of God."

Yet once by miracle, The truth no star could tell,

Beneath your midnight glow to earth was given,

What time the angelic mirth, Anthemned the glorious birth,

'Mong men, of Him who framed you orbed heaven,

Who came our lot below To share, and heal our woe,

That we might reach, through Him, the Eternal Love to know.

THE NIGHT COMETH.

FILL up the measure
Of each day's endeavour,
Prodigal never
Of life's peerless treasure,
Lo! the night cometh!

Waste not a moment,
Lest, through thy losing,
It pass with accusing
Witness to foment
The furies against thee.

On thine occasion
Seize, ere it fly thee;
Should it flit by thee,
No tongue of persuasion
E'er can recal it.

This instant escaping
Beyond thy controlling,
While ages are rolling
Abides, for thee shaping
A future unending.

Beneath the bright heaven,
Make friends of each hour:
To-day's work shall dower
Thy soul, with strength given
For task of to-morrow.

So when the night folding
Around thee, work endeth
On earth, lo! ascendeth
The wing'd soul, beholding
Night melt into morning.
1890.

AN EASTER THOUGHT.

If all our hopes and aspirations centred, But in this fluctuating mortal state; If, of the life to come, no promise entered Through this life's open gate. If it were ours alone, awhile to linger
In this strange world of shadows, then to die;
If here we saw beyond no angel finger,
Beckoning to worlds on high.

Oh! who could bear the burden and the sorrow
That fret the spirit ere she gains the goal?
Who would not woo pale Death, from him to borrow
Long quiet for the soul?

In the wild conflict, stirring round us ever,
The sea-like throbbings of the restless life,
The tumult, and the passion, and endeavour,
And the great world at strife.

And in the ties of friendship and affection, And in the noble deeds of noble men, And in the sad heart's tender recollection, There were no meaning then.

Better at once, the storm and sorrow fleeing,

To sleep where wild flowers blow and grasses wave;
And lose the sense of individual being,

In the unheeding grave.

But no! man's spirit is not only sister

To the dull worm, nor heir of the cold tomb;
Beyond this little life's dim shadowy vista,

There is a life to come.

A life, where, freed from every mortal trammel, Emancipate from every mortal pain, And purified from this world's false enamel, The soul shall breathe again:—

Shall breathe the atmosphere of life's completeness, Shall form eternal friendships, and shall prove, Untouched by earthly passion, all the sweetness Of pure unselfish love;

Shall enter perfect wisdom's glorious portal;
Shall summer in the sun of perfect bliss;—
Thy Lord, who conquered death and rose immortal,
My soul, secures thee this!

THE TRIUMPH OF FAITH.

Where, O grave! are the terrors that hover around thy grim portal?

Why should thy dismal abode disquiet a spirit immortal? Low in the dust may lie this fabric of wonderful fashion,

Worn and wrecked by the tempests of time and the conflicts of passion;

But the God-born soul, its tenant, to heaven ascending,

Leaving the dull clay behind her, and clasping a joy never ending,

Lives with the Saviour, who vanquished the grave and its terrors before her.

Lives where death is unknown, and the light of his love streaming o'er her,

Shuts out fear, passion, and pain, and all that on earth once depressed

(Trammelled and bound by the flesh) her life, and evermore

Thrones her in glory and rapture, clothes her with beauty immortal.

Grave! Thy terrors are quenched! undismayed I press up to thy portal;

There, to thy trust, to resign this bodily robe, while the spirit,

Triumphing, takes her glad flight to those realms where she needs not to wear it:

One day she will reclaim it, with all her companions returning,

When the New Earth shall shine forth, all jubilant, in the New Morning.

1875.

PASS WORDS.

Be! for in Being
Thou shalt fulfil
The One far-seeing
Infinite Will,
To be He made thee.

LIVE! Nobly living,
The life designed,
To others giving
Hand, heart, and mind,
Brotherly service.

Pray! By communion
With God maintained,
Thou, through that union,
Shalt be sustained
With His Divineness.

Work! For on working Triumph attends, No foes are lurking, But all are found friends, In path of the worker.

BEAR! For enduring
Patient thy load,
Thou art ensuring,
On the high road,
Wisdom immortal.

March! For so pressing
On, in God's order,
Fulness of blessing,
Over the border,
Endless awaits thee.

1884.

MONITION.

LIVE but for Duty
Under these skies;
Duty and Beauty
Are one to the wise;
Thine be their wisdom!

Faint not, nor falter,
Pursuing the right:
Dare not to palter
With conscience, God's light
Burning within thee:

Aye, let it guide thee
By night and by day,
Whate'er betide thee;
Then shall thy way
Bear thee right onward.

Angels to lend thee
Strength in all need,
Grace to befriend thee
In duteous deed,
Thou may'st rely on.

What, though dark demons
Of doubt thy steps haunt;
Pleasures, like lemans,
Lure to enchant,
Thou never heed them!

Halt not nor turn thee,
But hold on thy course;
Though Fortune spurn thee,
Haply far worse
Were her caresses.

By nought retarded
Make for the goal;
Amply rewarded,
There, the strong soul
Crowned shall stand victor!
1885.

CHRISTIAN SORROW.

BE thankful, Christian, to thy God for sorrow, However hard and wearisome to bear; Earth's dark to-day precedes Heaven's bright to-morrow, Nor any shade of grief can enter there.

Earth is our school, afflictions are our teachers, The monitors God sends us from above; And though they come with sternness in their features, The lessons which they bring are those of love. They teach how vain are all this world's attractions, How disappointing all our earthly dreams; They teach us to regard in all our actions, That better land where God's own glory beams.

They come, with kind reproofs and gentle chidings, To wean us from each dear besetting sin, To purge our souls and heal our sore backslidings, Subdue our wills and make us pure within.

They teach us in the world we are but strangers, That our abiding home is otherwhere; They save us from a thousand hidden dangers, And bring us, in our need, to God in prayer.

They make us feel our helplessness and weakness, And that we want a strength beside our own; They teach us to hang on, with childlike meekness, Fast by the chain that binds us to God's throne.

They put our faith and hope to loving trial, As precious gold is in the furnace tried; They make us strong to suffer self-denial, And overcome our vanity and pride.

And closer drawing us, and ever closer, Beneath the shadow of the Cross to dwell, They lead us, by a *via dolorosa*To perfect peace and joys unspeakable.

1864.

THE UNCHANGING FRIEND.

When o'er my prospects clouds and shadows gather, And on my heart the waves of sorrow roll; When dark the dealings of my Heavenly Father Appear, and spectral doubts affright my soul;

I call to mind His former loving-kindness,
And stronger faith from grateful memory springs,
Faith that discerns and trusts, where sense is blindness,
The kindly shelter of His guardian wings.

How often in the night of desolation,
The dreary hour of peril and of grief,
Hath He appeared, my light and my salvation,
And interposed His power for my relief.

My Friend and Guide, my ever sure defender!

E'en as a mother o'er her babe with love,

Through all life's chequered scenes, with glances tender,

Hath He looked down upon me from above.

And as, with gratitude, my mind retraces

The Past, spanned o'er by Mercy's radiant bow,
Each token of His love all fear displaces,
That He will ever leave me aidless now.

Though other friends may change, He changeth never;
His Power can fail not, nor His Light grow dim;
As yesterday, to-day and still for ever
He is the same,—and I will trust in Him.

THE EVER-PRESENT WORD.

DEUTERONOMY XXX. 14.

Not only in the reverend chronicles Of Eld, and visions of transported seers Beheld in far off times, and hallowed songs Of praise and prayer by raptured psalmists sung 'Neath Orient skies, abiding still to stir The sympathetic soul, the Word of God On earth is heard. 'Tis nigh thee ever new, And, speaking to thee, hour by hour, so thou But lend an ear attent its truths to hearken. For all things round thee hold of His some thought Enshrined within their being; and all turns Of changeful circumstance that touch thy life, And other lives than thine, have in them tones, Accents and echoes of His potent voice. But most in thine own heart it speaks to thee; There lies its chosen realm; so thou wilt search Those dim mysterious deeps; for o'er them broods The Spirit of His Love, even as of old O'er the unshapen and chaotic mass, Waiting to mould the whole to living use, At utterance of His Will-" Let there be light."

1892.

RESURGAM.

Ī.

It is the noon of night;
The firmament is overflowed with stars;
The moon is up; and Light
Peers out, like a sad captive through his bars,
Upon the darkness round.
Deep silence broodeth over field and wood;
All heaven and earth seem bound,
Throbbing asleep in lap of solitude.

Yet, but a little space,
This sleep of Nature will be overworn;
And we shall watch, apace,
Returning day mount up the gates of Morn;
Bearing vicissitude
To men; with novel thought and purpose rife;
Stirring the boundless brood
Of things; and quickening Nature into life.

II.

There is a midnight, yet,
That bears a deeper silence in its breath,
When human hearts forget
To throb with hope and fear, the Night of Death.
A vague and solemn hour,
When Darkness gathers up the skirts of Gloom,
Infolds the mortal flower,
And bears it withered to the lap of Doom.

And shall it then re-live,
Odour and blossom in a brighter day?
The spirit still survive,
When outward leaves of life are blown away?
Frail heart of flesh have Faith,
Nor deem the spirit's golden visions vain!
Though dark the night of Death,
Bright is the morrow-morn, and thou shalt rise again!

THE INNER LIFE.

I.

O HEART, impervious as a stone, To all a Saviour's tender love; His light is shining from above, To thee His voice, with pleading tone,

Comes breathing words of kindest speech,
And saying:—" Have I shed in vain
My blood to save thy soul from stain?
In vain have stretched My hand, to reach

"And pluck thee from the jaws of doom?

And art thou still so bent on death,
So snared by all the tempter saith,
Thou wilt not give thy Savjour room?"

Attend the kindly sound and wake!

Wake from thy false and fatal dream!

Unbar thy doors, and let the stream

Of living light pass in, and break,

Break up the clouds that shroud the soul From all her sense of heavenly things; Unlock thy being's deeper springs, And God-ward let their waters roll!"

H.

My heart replies,—"I fain would give
To Him, by right my Sovereign Lord,
My love, and yielding at His word,
To Him alone in all things live.

"But that I would I cannot do,
For still as days and years revolve,
I but resolve and re-resolve,
With purpose unto deed untrue.

"I long to rise and break away
From these compelling powers of ill;
Their influence, stronger than my will,
For ever leads my soul astray.

"I follow, while I loathe, the spell
That draws me down the deep abyss;
I long to scale Heaven's heights of bliss,
Yet still descend the path to Hell.

"O, not in me it lies to kill
The demon to whose yoke I bow;
Thou Caster out of Devils, Thou
Alone canst work the miracle!"

III.

Behold the Gadarene possessed,
Of feature grim and maniac eye,
Who scares the wild bird with his cry,
And frights the serpent from her nest;

Lo! as he prowls among the tombs,

He sees the Master's form appear,

The demons urge their victim near,

And rend and tear him as he comes:

They hear a voice whose awful sound Not Hell itself dares disobey; They loose their captive, haste away, And in the surging deeps are drowned.

With tranquil mien and joyful gaze,
The saved one sits at Jesu's feet,
Now clothed in raiment clean and neat,
And all his happy thoughts are Praise.

O, miracle divine and strange!

Thou Lord, Whose power alone can free
The souls of men, appear to me,
And work the like stupendous change!

IV.

What hammer strikes the stubborn stone,
That breaks beneath the mighty blow?
What influence bends the rebel low,
In tears before his Sovereign's throne?

What furnace-flame hath molten down
The adamantine chains that bound
My soul to sin? What guest hath found
The key to make my heart his own?

I weep as ne'er I wept before,
With bitter words my spirit chide,
Myself I from myself would hide,
As I the guilty Past run o'er.

O, whence this sorrow that I feel,
This overwhelming tide of grief?
As, hoping God may give relief,
To Him I penitently kneel.

O! dare I deem this grief must be Result of His o'ercoming grace? That He, Who died to save our race, Hath e'en a favour yet to me?

V

Ah, no! Too far my steps have erred,
Too long hath my resistance been,
No hope for me can gild the scene,
These tears are but my conscience stirred;

Conscience, that will not always sleep,
Conscience, that soon will ever wake,
When o'er my soul, the wrath shall break
In endless thunders loud and deep.

I know that Mercy, in the skies,

Her radiant rainbow-arch hath set;

Yet this can but in me beget

Fresh terrors, added agonies.

That I the day of grace have spurned,

Till now my sun hath quite gone down,
And o'er me looms the eternal frown,
And my last mercy lies inurned.

Not now, of mine, can any prayer
Find entrance in the Maker's ear;
He cries, "I called! Thou wouldst not hear,"
And nought is left me but despair.

VI.

Naught but despair! For e'en tho', yet,
God would be merciful to me;
How can I set my spirit free
From all her weary load of debt?

The Past her tablet of disgrace,
Where graven in each sin appears,
A barrier 'gainst all hope uprears,
And who the record shall erase?

No present tears, no future deeds

Can e'er those past misdeeds atone,

Which seen in light seem mountains grown,

The light by which the conscience reads.

Alas! whichever way I turn,
Some fury lifts her flaming scourge
And shrieking cries,—"Thou dost but urge
A vain attempt thy Peace to earn."

And, if amid my blackened sky,
Sometimes a breaking gleam appears,
And my torn soul a whisper hears,
"O trust in Me, thou shalt not die!"

While half in hope, and half in doubt
Upon the gleam I fix mine eyes,
Still denser, gloomier clouds arise,
And shut the radiant vision out.

VII.

Yet when mine anguish makes me dumb, Anguish too wild for tears to fall, I hear the far-off voices call, And still their yearning cry is "Come!"

"Come! leave thy dull despair behind, Come! leave thy heavy load of woe, Come, where the living waters flow, And life, joy, Heaven, thou all shalt find.

"Come, where the fountain gushes o'er
With healing for a world's disease,
Where planted blooms perennial peace,
Where we once sorrowing came before.

"Come where the Cross, uplifted, flings
For weary souls its grateful shade;
We came and, ransomed, we are made
To God for ever Priests and Kings.

"O come! thy need no more delay
Can brook; but where our voices lead,
Come, follow, and be saved indeed!
O come to Jesus, come away!"

VIII.

I turn me to the Written Word,
And read of Him, the Man divine,
Who trod the paths of Palestine,
His soul with tenderest pity stirred.

I hear Him preaching on the Mount,
While, from His lips, to those below,
His gentle consolations flow,
As waters from their native fount.

I see Him in the village streets,

They bring their sick, and maimed, and dumb,
O, not in vain to Him they come,
Whose heart-strings yearn to all He meets.

I see Him at the gates of Nain,
He marks the widowed mother's tear,
Utters His voice above the bier,
And gives her back her boy again.

Within His loving arms carest,
I see the little infants lie;
Affection beaming in His eye,
He folds them fondly to His breast.

To that lone grave, where Lazarus sleeps, I see His slow, sad footsteps wend, And grieving o'er His buried friend, He groans in spirit and He weeps.

I see Him in His dying throes,
I hear His murderers' mocking cries,
One prayer He offers ere He dies,
And pleads a pardon for His foes.

O thou, so full of sympathy,
Deep-hearted love and tenderness,
To Thee I cry, in my distress,
Thou Who art human, pity me!

IX.

His answer reaches from above,—
"I pity and have pitied thee;
I groaned, bled, died upon the tree,
Where could be vaster proof of Love?"

Thereto my troubled heart replies,—
"Tis not Thy doubted love I mourn,
But that I cannot make return,
And so deserve Thy sympathies."

Then He,—"Desert is not in man,
For guilt by merit to atone,
Thy merit lies in me alone,
Predestined ere the world began,

"A world's obedience to fulfil,
A world's great recompense to earn;
I love thee, soul! The one return
I ask, the yielding of thy will

"To Mine,"—Ah! There the hindrance lies;
I neither trust nor love Thee, Lord!
My stubborn will resents the word,
That slays her self-sufficiencies.

X.

In Simon's house the Lord reclines,
And Perfect Man, with men He deigns
To hold close converse, nor disdains
The sumptuous feast, the dainty wines.

A harlot comes behind the couch,
With timorous step and trembling fears,
Weeps o'er His feet repentant tears,
Nor spurns He the polluting touch.

Coldly the Pharisee looks down,
In scorn, upon the unbidden guest,
And waits, expectant with the rest,
To mark the Master's virtuous frown.

But He, with smiles that image Heaven,
Turns on the sinner His pure eyes,—
"O daughter, dry thy tears and rise,
And go in peace, thou art forgiven!"

XI.

The thief who hung upon the cross,
What time the Saviour groaned and bled,
Beheld that patient thorn-crowned head
Bowed to repair our utmost loss.

He saw, believed, and loved, and cried:—
"When Thou Thy kingdom Lord shalt see,
In Thy great love remember me;"—
To whom, the suffering Lord replied:—

"This day thy soul her sins forgiven, Shall be with me in Paradise!" O happy cross, on which he dies, And mounts from anguish into Heaven!

The harlot saved, the pardoned thief,
God's rich extent of grace reveal;
Would grace bring me like them to feel,
I too might entertain belief.

If great their guilt, their love was much,
What recompense may love not claim?
My guerdon doubtless were the same,
If I could only love like such.

XII.

Oh dull, and blinded of the Earth!

If saved these sinnners of thy race,
'Twas naught of guerdon, all of grace,
Their love was but an after birth,

Not that they loved, but were beloved, In them was fountain of belief, In Christ they trusted, sought relief, And found in Him their faith approved.

And only thou, like them repair

To Him whose boundless merits hide
Thy guilt, and a whole world's beside,
Thou too shalt find forgiveness there.

XIII.

As, when at night in feeble bark,
Which some unskilful helmsman steers,
The voyagers are filled with fears,
Because around them all is dark;

So I, on this night-sea of thought,
Where I but pilot ill my soul,
Hear the wild billows round me roll,
With trembling terrors overwrought.

As when the vessel nears the land,

The lights on shore the men descry,
And all their fear gives place to joy;
So, as I better understand

God's way of saving souls, the light
Speaks to my heart of nearing land,
I see the harbour-mouth at hand,
And joy to know my port in sight.

XIV.

Within the synagogue I stand,
With Jesus and the scribes of old,
And mong the worshippers behold
The man that hath the withered hand.

The Saviour speaks:—"Put forth thy hand!"
The scribes look on with doubting eyes,
But he nor questions, nor replies
Incredulous at the command.

He simply ventures on the Lord:

He reaches forth the useless limb;

O wonder, both to us and him!

To use 'tis perfectly restored.

Lord, I have but a withered heart;
But I will venture it on Thee;
Thou Who this faith hast given to me;
The healing surely wilt impart.

XV.

I see the Saviour slain for sin,

The nailëd hands, the piercëd side;

I see the Refuge open wide,

And lo! by Faith I enter in;

Faith, that the whole free pardon takes,
Faith, that, once born, is quick to grasp
The hand extended her's to clasp,
And all her own the atonement makes.

Now slides the heavy burden down,

The needless burden borne too long;

Ah Lord! I did Thee cruel wrong,

The smile mistaking for a frown.

For gazing on Thy thorny twine,
I knew 'twas planted on Thy head
By human guilt, and could but dread
The foul complicity of mine.

But gazing on Thine anguished brow By Faith, altho' the frown I see At sin, it wears a smile for me, And, Jesus, how I love Thee now.

XVI.

O mighty God! Thine was the love,

That gave the thought of mercy birth,

That brought Thee down to dwell on earth,
On earth, from undreamed heights above.

O mighty God! Thine was the power, That made the sacrifice avail, The sinless offering to prevail, Triumphant in that awful hour.

O Brother dear! Thine was the heart,
Whose sympathies no pang could quench;
Nor wrathful cloud, nor Nature's wrench,
Could turn Thee from Thy chosen part.

O Brother dear! Thine was the worth,
The human, meek obedience given,
That wrought us raiment fit for Heaven,
With spotless beauty shining forth.

O mighty God! O Brother dear!
Still loved, or human or divine;
In Heaven, sweet Brother, Thou art mine;
My sheltering God, Almighty here!

XVII.

Lord, I was blind, I could not see
In thy marred visage any grace;
But now the beauty of Thy face,
In radiant vision, dawns on me.

Lord, I was deaf, I could not hear The thrilling music of Thy voice; But now I hear Thee and rejoice, And all Thine uttered words are dear.

Lord, I was dumb, I could not speak
The grace and glory of thy name;
But now, as touched with living flame,
My lips Thine eager praises wake.

Lord, I was dead, I could not stir

My lifeless soul to come to Thee;

But now since Thou hast quickened me,
I rise from sin's dark sepulchre.

For Thou hast made the blind to see,

The deaf to hear, the dumb to speak,

The dead to live,—and lo! I break

The chains of my captivity.

XVIII.

The little boat is on the Lake,
And in the stern the Saviour lies;
In sleep, are closed His wearied eyes,
Tho' o'er Him loud the thunders break.

The lightnings flash upon the night
With lurid glare, the furious blast
Is shrieking round the fragile mast,
And the wild surge is seething white.

And on the heaving billows tost,

The pale disciples fill with dread,

To see the tempest round them spread,

And surely count their lives for lost.

They wake the Master from His sleep,—
"Lord save, we perish!"—Calmly He
Arises and rebukes the sea.

And lo! the wind forsakes the deep.

The raging waves are hushed to rest,
The mighty storm, its mightier Lord
Obeys, and lulling at His Word,
How tranquil is the water's breast!

Thus He, who makes the tempests cease, And curbs the winds by His control, Hath hushed the tumult of my soul, And lo! within me all is peace.

XIX.

Sweet Peace, that from the heavenly land, Like balm, falls on me when I kneel In prayer; a peace I surely feel, Ev'n while I cannot understand.

A peace, a calm unspeakable,

That wraps my soul in holiest bliss;
I know not how nor what it is,
Too deep, too glad for words to tell.

Sweet Peace, the pledge of Love divine,
Earnest of Heaven enjoyed below;
Nor more than this I care to know,
That such unfathomed peace is mine.

XX.

Now wheresoe'er my footsteps move, Since Grace hath taught me to believe, In all things emblems I perceive, Which mind me of the Lord I love.

The patient shepherd keeping guard,
Among his sheep that roam the wold;
The door that opens on the fold;
The lamb that bleats upon the sward;

The clustering vine that climbs the wall,
And spreads its leafy branches wide;
The spring, that from the mountain's side,
Rills in a gushing waterfall;

The way that leads across the wild: The rock that shadows half the plain. A shelter from the heat and rain: The rosy day-spring dawning mild:

The branch that, from decaying root, Still sprouts with verdure fresh and gay: The sun that warms with ripening ray The vellowing corn, the mellowing fruit;

The rose that scents the vagrant gale; The tower upon the hills afar; The light by day, by night the star That guides the wanderer thro' the vale;

And every beauteous thing I see, Each sight, each sound which Nature lends, Still speaks Thy name, Thou best of Friends! And I discern the type of Thee.

Yet one that only types in part, And can but semblance faint afford: Nor shall I wholly know Thee, Lord, Until I see Thee as Thou art.

XXI.

How sweet by day! How sweet by night! In contemplative mood to walk Alone with Christ, and hear him talk, The busy world forgotten quite.

To hang upon His gracious speech, Distilling heavenly wisdom down, And in His wisdom wiser grown, Truth's shining pinnacles to reach.

That truth of God, His lucid word Reveals to make our pathway plain; Thus the bright Tabor-peak I gain, And grow transfigured like my Lord!

Here would I evermore remain, With Him in close communion blent, Here pitch my life's abiding tent, Nor leave the sacred mount again.

But lo! I may not here abide;
Beneath us spreads the valley-land,
My Saviour takes me by the hand
And leads me down the mountain side.

For yonder, in the vale below,
Are those who need my sympathies;
There in the world my duty lies,
And Christ has work for me to do.

XXII.

I wonder not at those who first
Forsook the crowded walks of men,
And in the cloister and the glen,
Their days in contemplation nurst;

The monk, the lonely eremite,
Whose lives to solitude were given,
That naught of earth might cloud the Heaven
To which they journeyed from their sight.

In rocky cave, in convent cell
They hid,—their fear, lest aught should win
Their steps again to walk, with sin,
The smooth enticing path to Hell.

Yet not remote from human ill, Nor shut secluded from the strife, The Christian truly lives his life Or does the Master's hallowed will;

But in the tumult and the throng,
Where hungers want and moans distress,
A voice to soothe, a hand to bless,
With humble toil he moves along;

Nor turns from common tasks aside,
Nor fears to face temptation's power,
But trusts, in every trying hour,
To One in Heaven to safely guide.

XXIII.

Be mine, within the Master's field,
The round of Christian work to lead,
That Faith, made manifest by deed,
May fruitage to the gleaning yield.

Yet would not I those monks condemn, Nor blame their still secluded years, Their tree an ample fruitage bears, And Jesus had a work for them.

They nursed the sick, they fed the poor,
They mused, they wrote with careful pen,
Nor closed their hearts to pity, when
The houseless stranger sought their door.

And thro' long mediæval night,
That wrapt the nations like a pall,
Sheltered by many a convent wall,
Still burned unquenched the living light.

Not ours to mete their life's award,

Their life,—that age!—perchance 'twas best;

Nor without hope their ashes rest,

Till that great day which brings the Lord.

But in these days of restless mind,
When to and fro the many run,
And knowledge circles with the sun,
My labour lies among mankind.

Those tasks my Lord would have me do, Must I assiduously fulfil, Making life beautiful, and still For pattern, keeping him in view.

XXIV.

Who looks for Truth may oft behold A truth in mould of fiction cast, Witness this legend of the Past, Some ancient chronicler hath told:—

"One morn, absorbed in holy prayer, Within his cell a friar knelt, Knelt long, for in his soul he felt As tho' the listening Lord were there.

"Till, in an ecstasy, he raised
His eyes, and sudden glory beamed
Around the place, and, as it seemed,
He on the living Saviour gazed.

"With wonder words were vain to tell,
And all his heart to rapture stirred,
Spell-bound he gazed, until he heard
The tinkling of the convent bell.

"The bell that sounds his summons thence,
To duty at the convent gate,
There on the suffering poor to wait,

The daily bounty to dispense.

"He started,—on that blessed view,
Yet one more ardent look he bent;
Then meekly rose, and duteous went,
His morn's allotted work to do:

"Which done, with mingled hope and fear He sought his cell,—O wonder! still The glory doth the chamber fill, The radiant vision yet is there;

"And lo! a voice the silence breaks,
Those lips divine appear to move,
And breathing tenderness and love,
The visioned Saviour sweetly speaks—

"' Twice blest in faithful labour thou,
In trial duteous found, and true,
Had'st thou forborne thy task to do,
I had not staid to bless thee now."

XXV.

Teach me, O Lord, Thy holy way, And give me an obedient mind, That in Thy service, I may find My soul's delight from day to day.

Guide me, O Saviour, with Thy hand
And so control my thoughts and deeds,
That I may tread the path that leads
Right onward to the Blessed Land.

Help me, O Saviour, here to trace
The sacred footsteps Thou hast trod,
And meekly walking with my God,
To grow in goodness, truth, and grace,

Guard me, O Lord, that I may ne'er
Forsake the right, or do the wrong,
Against temptation make me strong,
And round me spread Thy sheltering care.

Bless me, O Saviour, in each task
Begun, continued, done for Thee;
Fulfil Thy perfect work in me;
What less? What greater dare I ask?

XXVI.

Expectant of my Lord's command,

Till He my work appoint I wait;

Some work, with which my powers may mate,

Divinely suited to my hand.

Some work, by which my soul may grow
In health and sinew, and acquire
Strength to fulfil her large desire,
That from the flower the fruit may show.

Some work, by which my heart may prove
On whom her stedfast wishes rest,
And, undeniably, attest
Her deep sincerity of love.

Some work, whose end shall make my days
Nor useless, nor ignoble glide;
A work whose influence shall abide,
Redounding to the Master's praise.

O Master! I would yield to Thee,
Of life's great energies, the whole,
Even as the lavish rivers roll
Their wealth of waters to the sea.

XXVII.

He speaks:—" No work, no place, too mean, But oft occasion will afford To prove thy duty to thy Lord, And make thy heart's attachment seen;

"No time, no calling but is rife
With opportunities of good,
Which, rightly seized and understood,
Will serve thee for ennobling life.

"The gentle word, the answer sweet,
That turns away the cloud of wrath,
The kindly succour on thy path,
To needy stranger in the street;

"The cup of water, loaf of bread To hungry beggar at thy door, Or, wanting gifts, the heart that o'er Them bleeds and wishes it could aid;

"The evil temper smitten down,
The faithful soul that sin rebukes,
Rebukes, but softly, for it looks
Back on the sins that were its own;

"The meek, the prompt obedience given
To each divine revealed command;
The taking with contented hand
The lot in life ordained of Heaven;

"Live thus! Thy years shall blossom o'er
With fragrant beauty: thou shalt bring,
Thus, thy soul's richest offering,
To God,—a Paul could do no more"

XXVIII.

Behold yon pearl of womanhood,
On whom an ancient line of kings
Its gathered pride of glory flings,
A maiden born of royal blood!

She cares not for the lighted rooms,
Where strength and beauty grace the ball,
Her's is a nobler festival,
A lovelier light her path illumes.

With winning, condescending ways,
Among the labouring poor she glides,
Where sickness lies and sorrow hides,
And want prolongs its wretched days.

Her tread the little orphan knows,

The widow smiles her glance to meet,
And blessings, down the village street,
Attend her footsteps as she goes.

Unconscious of the admiring gaze,
From house to house she moveth mild,
Brings garments for the new-born child,
Or with the stricken mourner prays.

Each eve, as down the western skies

The sun's bright steeds to rest are driven,
The peasant lifts his soul to Heaven,
And 'tis for her his prayers arise.

O happy daughter! whose it is
To mind us thus, of him we've lost;
O happy nation! that can boast
Among thy maidens one like this!

XXIX.

How blest, with each departing sun,

The man who in his heart can say,

"Lo! I have walked with God to-day,"

Rejoicing in his duty done!

But, where is he, so faithful found,
His soul no inward chiding hears?
Who, in his happy conscience, bears
No lance to probe, no sting to wound?

Ah! this it were to sink to rest
With undisturbed mind at ease;
But, touched with taint of old disease,
We all are faulty at the best.

And yet, the lingering evil lurks
Within our hearts and clouds our deeds,
There's one in Heaven who intercedes,
And perfects our imperfect works.

XXX.

O Thou great Advocate on high!
Still plead my cause before the throne;
I have no worth to call my own,
'Tis Thou must all the worth supply.

Plead for me, when my labor seems
To overtax my feeble powers,
When thro' weak hand and flying hours,
High purposes dissolve in dreams.

Plead for me, when the voice of Pride
Would whisper of achievement won,
Of merit gained in something done,
And drive the Tempter from my side.

Plead for me, when perplexed I find
My sense of light grow vague and dim,
And spectral doubts and shadows swim
Across the vista of the mind.

Plead for me, when unequal strife
With superhuman foes I wage,
Disarm their malice, curb their rage,
Nor let them harm my inner life.

Plead for me, when in sorrow bowed;
With aching heart and drooping head
I weep;—and some sweet radiance spread
O'er the dark fringes of the cloud.

Plead for me, when I cross at length

The stream that bounds my being here;

My quickening life in Death appear,
In that great weakness be my strength.

XXXI.

Oh joy! that He Who reigns on high
Is one with Him on earth Who died,
His heart still gushing with the tide
Of truest human sympathy.

No woe that wakes our wild unrest;
No care the harassed mind that frets,
But deep compassion prompt begets
In the warm fountains of His breast;

Not that cold pity, which we meet
With shy reserve, because it lacks
The quick-discerning eye which tracks
Grief to her brooding lorn retreat;

That sees the surface-grief alone,
But cannot pass the outer gate,
Where, all within, disconsolate
The bruised and stricken heart makes moan.

His own remembered griefs are keys
With which He enters into ours,
And, as on thirsty lands the showers,
So fall His gentle solaces

Upon the troubled heart, that throws
Her doors wide open to so blest,
So real a Friend; a welcome guest,
He comes and soothes her wildest woes.

She feels the comfort of His words, Uttered in whispers mild and bland; So lyres yield music, when the hand Of some true minstrel sweeps the chords.

XXXII.

He suffering worked, and working wept,
His path 'twas mingled toil and tears;
All sorrows that can vex our years
He tasted, yet right onward kept;

Right onward; what, tho' faithless friend
Might leave him; all their arts malign
Against him foe with foe combine;
He kept right on;—a cross the end.

And if my help-mate suffering be,
And I must climb where sorrows shroud
My path in folds of sombre cloud,
Shall I no longer follow Thee,

Scared by my strange companion's frown?

No! with brave heart and dauntless brow,
Let me toil onward, even as Thou—
Thy goal a cross, and mine a crown.

XXXIII.

What silvery streams so smoothly glide, 'Neath overhanging bank and brake, But when the wrathful winds awake, They roll with troubled gurgling tide?

What sky, so soft with azure calm,
So bright with summer sunshine deckt,
But spreads with wandering cloudlet fleckt,
That breaks the all-surrounding charm?

What rose that blossoms in the bower,
And scents the freshening breeze of morn,
But on the stem some envious thorn
Is lurking underneath the flower?

So here, no life so wholly glad,
But, on the scene of its delights,
Some grief, some pain intrudes and blights
The joy, and makes the spirit sad;

No child of earth to whom the years,
So blandly come, so bland depart,
They plant no trouble in the heart
To stir the fountains of its tears.

XXXIV.

Sorrow, of sin the sad entail;
Ours by the primal curse ordained,
When that great shock the world sustained,
And Eden saw the serpent's trail.

Then all creation groaned with pain,
Nor beamed the skies so bright a blue;
The trees put on a darker hue,
And thistles tangled all the plain;

The mountain rills to torrents foamed;
The fertile fields were deserts grown,
Where, moved by instincts erst unknown,
With savage step the wild beast roamed;

Nor more among the woodland ways,

The birds so blythely tuned their throats
To song, but mingled mournful notes
Of melancholy with their lays;

While man, at whom the curse was hurled,
Went forth beneath a darkened Heaven,
An exile from his Eden driven,
With pain and toil to walk the world.

XXXV.

The servant of the living God,

Though high his hope and deep his peace,

Must dream not of a life at ease,

Or path 'mong laughing landscapes trod;

Where only blossoms line the way,
And pleasant branches spread their screen
Of shade, and, gladdening all the scene,
Clear undulating waters play.

O'er barren tract, up lonely height, O'er scorching plain and wild morass, Through rude defile and rugged pass, And often girt with storm and night,

His chequered, homeward journey lies,
To that high mansion, where, alone,
All sighs are hushed and pangs unknown,
And grief ne'er looks thro' tearful eyes.

Thus he, as others of his race,
Must heir the common heritage,
And still as life unfolds her page,
The ever-changing line must trace,

Now glad, now sad.—And if 'tis given
To him a higher life to know,
And thro' the mists that spread below,
To gain beyond a glimpse of Heaven;

Not less he shares, with all his kind,
The common good, the common ill,
But in them sees the Higher Will,
Which shapes them to an end designed.

XXXVI.

My Master bids me, here to lay
My life's account with pain and loss,
To look with him to bear the cross,
With Him to tread the dolorous way.

The meek disciple, even as Christ,
Must drink the cup with bitters rife,
Who would with Jesus rise to life,
To the same death must be baptis'd;

Not more, not greater than the Lord,
But as his Lord the servant is;
Christ's life, Christ's death, Christ's Cross are
his,

To bear, to boast; -so runs the Word.

XXXVII.

The brook with tinkling murmur flows,

The palm trees wave their boughs on high,
And 'gainst the moon-illumined sky,
The mountains lift their blackened brows.

Deep in the vale, the olives shade
And close the little garden round,
Where the disciples on the ground,
With tired limbs, in sleep are laid,

Not His to sleep, Who near them keeps His lonely vigil, breathing sighs Burdened with bitterest agonies, And tears of awful anguish weeps.

Nor vents His woe in tears alone,
But His racked frame at every pore
Is oozing blood, that crimsons o'er
The grass around Him, trickling down.

"Father!" He cries, "Behold Thy Son;
O take this dreadful cup away!—
Dire prelude of a direr day,—
Yet not My will, but Thine be done!"

Nor vain that meekly offered prayer,
The Minister of Heaven descends,
Takes not the cup away, but lends
The human soul a strength to bear.

O wild, O wondrous agony!

More wondrous patience, still, that bore!

Live in my memory evermore,

Thou dear, thou dread Gethsemane!

XXXVIII.

If now thine inward sight be clear,
And thou canst bear to meet the blaze
Of light, lift up thine eyes and gaze,
With that Apocalyptic seer,

Who saw the throne of God revealed,
On those immortal hosts that throng,
And roll the tides of endless song,
O'er all Heaven's dazzling outspread field.

Their years of joy increasing run,
Their hours are cycles, cycles hours;
Upon their day no twilight low'rs,
For God is their perpetual sun.

Untired they roam the azure meads,
The tree of life their food supplies,
They drink the brooks of Paradise,
Whither the Lamb their footsteps leads.

They know no want, they feel no care,

They heave no sigh, they weep no tear,

No sin they mourn, no danger fear,

No toil endure, and need no prayer.

Their hope its ample fruit hath found,

Their faith is merged in cloudless sight,

And dwelling in the Lord's own light,

Their bliss is with perfection crowned.

Whence came they? by what peaceful road?
Through what ambrosial meadows led?
O'er what sweet pastures did they tread,
And reach at last their blest abode?

By steps of sorrow, paths of care,
Through waves of tribulation borne,
By labor harassed, anguish worn,
They travelled ere they entered there.

O happy sorrow! masked friend!

Dear foe-like friend, or friendly foe!

Be thou my life's companion, so

My life be crowned with such an end!

XXXIX.

And can I then, with will resigned,

Take sorrow for my friend and mate?

Are there no murmuring thoughts that grate
Upon the patience of the mind?

That seize the soul, when least on guard,
And whisper bitter things and say,—
"Why art thou led so drear a way,
And schooled by discipline so hard?"

How hard to bear the weight of ill,

To smart beneath the scourging rod,

To suffer at the hands of God,

And trust His loving-kindness still!

How hard 'mid scathing storm and blight,

The wreck of earthly hopes and joys,

To feel,—"His ways, tho' dark, are wise,
His dealings good, His counsels right!"

O Saviour! bind with closer bands
This rebel will, but half subdued;
Drive out the dull complaining mood,
And make me passive in Thy hands.

XL.

O Blessed Life! The heart at rest, When all without tumultuous seems, That trusts a Higher Will, and deems That Higher Will, not hers, is best.

O Blessed Life! The mind that sees,
Whatever change the years may bring,
A mercy still in every thing,
And, shining through all mysteries.

O Blessed Life! The soul that soars, When sense of mortal sight is dim, Beyond the sense, beyond to Him, Whose love unlocks the heavenly doors.

O Blessed Life! Heart, mind, and soul,
From self-born aims and wishes free,
In all at one with Deity,
And loyal to the Lord's control.

O Life, how blessed, how divine!

High life, the earnest of a higher!

Saviour, fulfil my deep desire,

And let this blessed Life be mine!

XLI.

Yet here we find no long repose,
Not only sorrows must be met,
But there are fiercer trials yet,
And strifes to wage with ghostly foes

Infernal powers intent on ill. That haunt our steps through all the scene.

Their might unknown, their hosts unseen,

They battle with our strength of will.

They watch the inlets of the mind, About the gates they crouch and lurk, And many a subtle spell they work, The wary sentinels to blind.

Sometimes upon the soul they burst With gathered force, a demon crowd, Bristling with fury, foes avowed, And wielding all their arms accurst,

Sometimes they come with hate concealed, Masked in a pleasing friendly guise, And whisper soft seducing lies, To tempt the wavering will to yield:

And still they ply, from day to day, Their fraud and force to slay our trust, Crumble our heavenly hope to dust. And tear us from our Lord away.

XLII.

But tho' hell's legioned champions swarm Around me, on my downfall bent, They but pursue a vain intent; Nor can my spirit suffer harm;

To Him their crafty wiles are known. Who o'er me keeps perpetual ward; Nor to its own unsteadfast guard, E'er leaves my wayward heart alone.

His wakeful eye their number scans, His power their raging fury bounds, His wisdom all their skill confounds. And baffles their injurious plans.

And when my trembling spirit stands Ready to yield beneath their power; Her hour of peril is the hour Of safety in His guardian hands.

XLIII.

When most imperilled, most secure!

Would vain presumption here find room?

Grace gives no warrant to presume,

But only succour to endure.

'Tis Grace that makes the victor, yet
Or ere the victor-wreath be worn,
The deadly conflict must be borne,
The danger braved, the assailants met.

Grace aids, but does not supersede,

The warrior's own self-striving powers;

To carry on the war is ours,

'Tis God's to help us in our need;

Not to make void the strife and yield

The spoil to hands that struck no blow,
But where the soldier fronts the foe,
To bear him safely through the field.

XLIV.

Behold, where Salem's pillars rise,
Entranced the Great Apostle kneels,
While the third radiant Heaven reveals
Her glories to his wondering eyes.

With rapture whelmed, he scarce can say
If still the body clasps the mind,
Or if the soul hath left behind
On native earth her ark of clay;

He only knows the hampering cords

Are riven, that chained her soaring wings;

He looks on unimagined things,

He hears unutterable words.

Until the dazzling vision o'er,

He wakes to sense of Earth again,
Alone within the sacred fane,
And kneeling on the temple-floor;

When lo! the wily fiend assails

His mind with whispered words of scorn,
Plants in his flesh the wounding thorn,
And all his heart within him fails.

Then thrice to Heaven he lifts his cry,
Thrice on his God for help he calls,
Nor calls in vain, for softly falls
An answer from the listening sky;—

"My grace shall be thine ample stay,
My perfect strength shall prove thine aid
In weakness!"—At that voice afraid,
The Tempter shuddering slinks away.

XLV.

How oft, when happiest in the love Of Him, on Whom our spirits rest, How often, when we feel most blest In union with the powers above,

The envious fiend intrusive breaks
Upon the soul's serene delight,
And round her, with malignant spite,
The elements of discord wakes.

So have I watched, from rocky strand,
The waters on a summer's day,
Have seen the peaceful waves, at play,
Come dancing gaily to the land;

When driving clouds before its path,
A sudden squall hath swept the sky,
Hath tossed the seething foam on high
And lashed the billows into wrath.

XLVI.

Who, trusting to the promised grace
Of Him whose promise never fails,
As evil day by day assails
His mind, to turn him from the place

To which his eager hopes aspire,
Resists and beats the Tempter down,
Shall, from the contest hardier grown,
An added strength of soul acquire;

Shall gain a still increasing joy,
Result of each new victory won,
And gather, with each setting sun,
More meetness for the glad employ

Of that inheritance in light,
Where never, on the mount of God,
By His triumphant armies trod,
Comes foe to tempt, or sin to blight.

XLVII.

So let me, with a steadfast aim,

Pursue the right and shun the wrong,

My Saviour's statutes still the song,

The sweetest that my lips can frame!

What tho', thro' hell's opposing powers,
My forward footsteps I must win,
What tho' the syren voice of sin
Would lure me to forbidden bowers;

Though wealth would bribe and pleasure 'tice, Or honour beckon me aside, Tho' my own thoughts should e'en divide Against me with mine enemies;

I must not yield, but to the goal
Urge on my course, with Christ in view,
Still cleave to Him with purpose true,
As points the magnet to the pole.

XLVIII.

I cannot doubt that He, Whose power First raised me into spiritual life, Will shield my soul in every strife, And save in every trying hour.

Shall He, Whom angel hosts obey,
Who keeps, amid the void of space,
Suspended systems in their place,
And rolls the planets on their way;

Shall He, who holds within his hands
The waters of the rolling deep,
Whose whisper lulls the winds to sleep,
Or sends them shrieking o'er the lands;

Shall He, Who formed the dark, the light,
Who scooped the valleys, piled the hills,
Let loose the merry-laughing rills,
And torrents foaming from their height;

Shall He, Whom all Creation shows
All-wise, Almighty, All-divine,
The soul that trusts in Him resign,
To glut the malice of His foes?

Sooner this universe again

To primal chaos shall be driven;

Sooner shall Hell be turned to Heaven,
Or God Himself shall cease to reign.

XLIX.

Oh Thou, Who on Thy throne sublime,
O'er all things crowned with sovereign might,
Dost guide, upon their mystic flight,
The complex chariot wheels of Time!

Thy hand the fate of empires sways,
Alike in progress and decline,
They but subserve designs of Thine,
Thy triumphs in the end of days.

So, let me deem, the Powers of Ill
In naught can make Thy purpose swerve,
Unwilling agents, yet they serve
The gracious counsels of Thy will.

Thy plans, by us not understood,—
(For how should mortals read Thy mind?)—
Have all our seeming ills designed,
And e'en our conflicts for our good;

And tho' by strange temptations crost,
We fear and fill with doubting thought,
To Thee no soul, that Thou hast bought,
But is too precious to be lost.

L.

Though fold on fold of cloud may form,
And raging tempests shroud the skies,
Amid the gloom my soul descries
The rainbow arching o'er the storm.

And still she cheers her way with song,
That wins its words from high belief,—
Brief is the tempest,— conflict brief,
Years pass,— and only Heaven is long!

And still she trusts the plighted word,—
All fears defied, all doubts withstood,—
"All things together work for good,
For good to them that love the Lord."

And still she feels that Christ is nigh,
For, tho' she sees Him not, she knows
It is His loving presence throws
The rainbow o'er her clouded sky.

LI.

And well the tempted heart may rest
In Him for her complete defence,
Who knows by self-experience
All conflicts that our peace molest.

Him, too, when here, as Man, He trod
The earth with stainless soul and pure,
The wily Tempter sought to lure
To do the things disowned of God.

As thrice the foe made vain essay,

Flashed from His lips the Father's word,
As from its sheath some trenchant sword,
And filled the demon with dismay.

Hence, now, as throned in power above,
He sees our dangers, counts our foes,
And watches o'er our weal, He knows
To succour them that trust His love.

LII.

Nor only, 'mong the unseen powers
Around our path, are those of ill,
But there are mightier spirits still,
Servants of God,—their God and ours.

Dear to the Lord, to them are dear

The souls for whom He died,—they keep,
Or when we wake, or when we sleep,
Watch o'er our safety, hovering near.

When Satan tempts the soul to sin,
When evil thoughts and wishes rise,
When conscience fallen on slumber lies,
And yielding grows the heart within;

When to some hidden danger blind,
We near the abyss and touch the brim,
Their voices reach us through the dim
And clouded portals of the mind;

With whispered warning soft and low,
That, ere we stumble, cries forbear!
And bids the soul, betimes, beware
The fatal step that leads to woe.

LIII.

With God above and Christ within
And all good angels round about,
Down craven fear and coward doubt!
For 'mid the fray I can but win.

Through toil, thro' suffering, and thro' strife,
My Saviour hath before me been,
To guide my footsteps thro' the scene,
And render plain the way of life.

In suffering, strife and labor He
Will still, the Grace I need, impart
To comfort, strengthen, nerve my heart,
Whate'er event in life may be.

Then welcome conflict, toil and pain!

By these my spirit shall ascend,

As steps to that expected end,

Her goal of everlasting gain.

LIV.

All meaner wishes in my breast,
As lesser lights before the sun
Grow dim and fade, give place to one,
That kinglike rules it o'er the rest.

The deep, the yearning, strong desire,
In thought and outward deeds that show
The thought within, like Christ to grow,
His fair resemblance to acquire.

As in some famous school of art,

The master's style his pupils learn,
And copy in their own, I yearn
The radiant image in my heart,

Of Thy pure manhood, Lord, to hold;
Not to admire and love alone,
But by Thy life to shape my own,
Thy mind of mine the beauteous mould.

O Thou, whose path in Galilee
With lowly meekness erst was trod,
Help me to bear, sweet Son of God,
Thine easy yoke, and learn of Thee!

LV.

The Christ-like manhood, pure and whole, To have and hold it free from blame, Than this no higher, grander aim Can find a lodgment in the soul.

But, Saviour, how unlike to Thee,
At our imperfect best we are;
In growth of soul how slight, and far
From all that here we fain would be!

We wake at morn, and rising build The lofty purpose for the day, The hours to evening wear away, Our aspirations unfulfilled.

So fair the plan, so incomplete,
And out of form, the structure raised;
Our actions, by ourselves appraised
Unfit the Master's eye to meet.

And yet, with Him, the earnest will
Is 'gainst the acted failure weighed;
He knows whereof our frame is made,
And our frail dust remembereth still.

LVI.

But he who, with the Lord in view,

To that high manhood still aspires,

And strives with earnest aim, nor tires,
His holy pattern to pursue,

And pleads with fervent prayer, that wins Sure audience with the King of Heaven, That Grace may, day by day, be given To overcome his hampering sins; Though e'er his swift desires outrun
The life attained, his soul shall grow
In beauty, and more nearly show
The image of the Blessed One.

Thus, Saviour, if I cannot be
All that Thou wert, O let me still,—
Thou Who dost all my wishes fill,—
Grow liker and more like to Thee!

LVII.

As one, who counts, among his friends,
A man whose mind exceeds his own,
Insensibly receives the tone
And print that other's influence lends;

And from close converse, mutual talk,
And sweet association grows
To shape his thoughts and deeds by those,
Which mark his comrade's statelier walk;

So, from close converse with the Lord,
By stedfast faith and earnest prayer
Maintained, His servant grows to wear
A life with His in sweet accord;

A life that takes from Him its tone,
And which, though here and there untrue
To the pure mould, yet shows to view
The shape imprinted of His own.

LVIII.

Nor shall the spirit always sigh,

To find the aspiring wish unreal,

Of likeness to her fair ideal,

That holy Manhood throned on high.

In expectation of a time,
Whose warrant is the written Word,
She lives, and looks to see the Lord
Descend again, in power sublime.

She knows that every circling year,
That every passing hour which runs,
The rising moons and sinking suns,
But bring His angel-chariot near.

And then,—her highest crown of bliss!

She knows her hope its fruit will bear!

That her Lord's image she shall wear,

For she will "see Him as He is."

LIX.

O glorious hope! whose forward gaze
Outruns the vista of the years,
And rests with smiles, that gleam thro' tears,
Undoubting on the end of days.

Whatever here the hours may bring; Whatever bitter herbs may blow, Along our wayside track below; Whatever clouds their shadows fling,

Gaunt o'er our path, or boulders rise
Rugged and huge, and hard to climb,
Hope soars above the night of Time,
And summers in Eternal skies.

Lamp of the pilgrim's chequered road,
Aye, kindled by some heaven-born spark,
With quenchless beam, amid the dark
She lights him to his Lord's abode.

Joy of the pilgrim's laden breast,
As thro' the chequered scene he fares,
She whispers, amid toils and cares,
The solace of unceasing rest.

Source of the pilgrim's vigorous strength,

To front the fray and cope with foes,

Hope gives him courage, for he knows
The conqueror shall be crowned at length.

Stay of the pilgrim's soul in death,
For when this fitful life shall cease,
Hope, as the spirit finds release,
Shall animate his latest breath.

LX.

Great Paraclete! by Whom alone
At first our steps to Christ are led,
Bereft of Whom our souls are dead,
O make my heart Thy living throne.

If e'er in me Thy power divine
Hath wrought the vital change, and slain
The demon in my breast, remain
Sole Monarch of the rescued shrine.

If e'er in me Thy quickening breath
Hath made my soul in Christ to live,
Increasing life each moment give,
That I no more may taste of Death.

Live in me, like a fragrant heat
Diffused through all my spiritual powers;
Fall on me, like the dropping showers,
That make the moistened meadows sweet.

Lay underneath Thy whole control
The inmost fount of being; bind
To Thine the subject will and mind,
And reign imperial o'er the soul.

The baser thought, the grosser fire
Extinguish, and my vision clear,
To see, beyond the sensual sphere,
The objects of my large desire,

With realizing faith. Protect
My steps from every tempting lure,
Make and then keep my spirit pure,
And all Thy work in me perfect!

And if, of these imperfect lays,

The thoughts, the feelings which they sing,
Thyself in aught hath been the spring,
Though slight their fame and brief their days,

Yet, as the records of a mind
To whom Thy grace its light imparts,
O bless them to the minds and hearts
Of some,—my brethren 'mongst mankind.

The Morld Redeemed,

IN SIX BOOKS.

BOOK I.

REDEMPTION NEEDED.

THE ARGUMENT:—Proem, invocation of the Spirit of Poesy—The Theme proposed—Divine aid sought—The Origin of the need—The Creation of the World—Of Man—The Test of his loyalty—His Sin—The Existence of Evil a Mystery—Effects of Man's sin on the Creation of God—Effects on Man himself—Man's ruin inherited by his posterity—The Work of God to redeem him.

OH! Thou, who in the season of sweet youth, Spirit of Poesy, an angel-guest Didst visit my delighted heart, and there Build for thyself an altar and a shrine. Filling its temple chambers with the sound Of wondrous melodies, which rose and fell Like silvery streams of fountains in their play! Who o'er my life, yet unfamiliar grown With care and sorrow's grim aspect, didst fling Voices of song, as by the summer winds Are scattered round the odours of the flowers; I woo thee, now, to wake thine ancient spell, And shed, again, thine influence on my soul; If long neglected, never yet unloved; For tho' my lot, for many a year, hath been, Like a frail bark, to drive before the storm And struggle with the waves of grief; I still Have cherished, as a miser hoards his gold, The fond remembrance of the lays that leapt Spontaneous from my heart, as from the breast Of fabled Memnon melodies at morn, Nor e'er the hope relinquished, yet to tune A strain that should survive me and go down. To men of other time, the legacy Of one who emulated, not in vain, The master minstrels of the storied Past!

Spirit of Song, return upon my heart! But come not thou, as erst in youth, to wake A strain that soars no higher than the scenes Which bound our narrow range of vision here, Gay songs of earthly love, and amorous lays Employed to charm some listening damsel's ear, And fabling lyrics tuned to body forth The fleeting day-dreams of each vagrant hour; But come, the soul of holy harmonies And hallowed notes, which Heaven may not disdain Approvingly to hear: such as employed The harp of Israel's exiled shepherd king. As lone he trod Engeddi's silent waste, Forgot his wrongs and woes, while on the night The wild winds heard his woven songs of praise: Or his, the princely bard, who, in the fane Of Salem's ancient splendour, wondering saw, Saw wondering and abashed, high on his Throne And circled by the adoring Seraphim, The manifested majesty of God: And from that hour, touched by a living coal From Heaven's own altar, with prophetic lips Sang the long glories of Messiah's reign: Or his, the matchless dreamer, who, in trance By Chebar's wave, the mystic vision saw Of that grand chariot in its vast career, Wheel intervolved in wheel, still rolling on By cherub might impelled, while o'er its flight Watched, from his tranquil seat of amber light, The God enthroned in likeness of a man: Or his, the sorrow-shadowed Florentine, Who, borne on wings of thought, went travelling far Thro' dismal horrors of infernal bale. And purgatorial realms, and trod the stairs Of God's high Paradise, by that blest maid Led, who in human guise, ere Death her soul Transfigured into glory, in his youth Had won his poet-heart to thoughts of love: Or his, the great Iconoclast, whose eye, Grown dark to all of sublunary mould, With gaze that pierced beyond the sensual range Resting on things divine, in spirit soared Beyond the sun, beyond the starry dome, And, bringing inspiration from the skies, Rolled o'er the world his songs of organ, tone,

Like echoes caught up from the realms of God, And told of Eden, forfeit and regained:
Be mine a kindred strain; a strain that swells
And soars and falls and swells and soars again,
In numbers, stately, solemn, rolling on,
Like wave on wave with music to the shore,
And clothed upon with majesty of speech,
Such as befits the grandeur of the theme.

Redemption, theme of matchless might! high theme, Dear to the heart of God! to angels dear, As, bending o'er the sacred ark that shrines The hidden mysteries of grace, they look With ardent gaze and deep desire to scan. Redemption, theme how dear to ransomed men! That tells of counsels planned and marvels wrought Their ruin to retrieve; and since revealed; Which, else, had passed the power of thought to reach, Aspiring heavenward in her loftiest flight.— Before the hills in order stood, or flowed The stream, or foamed the torrents from their heights Among the crags; ere Earth arose to greet Her Maker's voice, or reigned alternate Night And Day; more ancient than those early songs, Which, from the morning stars, proclaimed the glee Of Seraphim, the heavenly champaign round, When from the void a myriad worlds upsprang; While in the unfathomed womb of Chaos, yet Creation in unconscious embryo lay, Redemption's theme employed the thoughts of God. And when, at length, the scenes of Time shall close, When Earth dissolving fades away, and all The splendid architecture of the skies Falls crumbling into ruin, and new Heavens. And a new earth where righteousness shall reign, Rise issuing from the ashes of the old, Fairer and lovelier and more glorious far, And ever bodying forth the praise of God, In those pure realms of unimagined bliss, By all their glad innumerable hosts, Souls purged from every lingering stain of sin, And beauteous forms brought from the imprisoning grave And aye transfigured into light, to wear The radiant image of the Holy One, The wonders of Redemption shall be told,

From lip to lip, and rapturously proclaimed In jubiletic and eternal song.

But, O my soul! say how thy vast intent Shalt thou be strong to compass? Here to scale The undiscovered height, the plumëd wing Of flaming seraph in his boldest flight Were frail, nor e'er the pinnacle might reach; And here, to pierce the impenetrable abyss, No eve, but of the Infinite alone. And thy weak wings are clogged Could e'er avail. With sin, and hampered with the cords of sense. And all thy vision clouded with the mists Of passion, error, ignorance and guilt. Say, canst thou fix thy keen and steadfast gaze, Unblinded, on the dazzling orb of day? Say, canst thou track the untraversed milky way, And tell the number of the starry worlds That fill the vast of space? Say, canst thou plunge Beneath the wave, and roam the watery depths. And gather up the unnumbered gems that pave Old Ocean's hidden floor? Say, canst thou pierce To Earth's deep centre, and thence disinter The secret stores of untold wealth she holds In her unfathomed womb? And yet, my soul, 'Twere easier thine to look upon the sun Unblinded, count the stars or make thine own The buried wealth of earth and sea, than rise To comprehend Redemption's glorious height, Or down the illimitable deep to drop The feeble plummet of thy venturous thought, And fathom all its boundless mysteries. Ah! wouldst thou know and sing them? thou must soar Where creature pinion ne'er hath dared to rise; Must see the Eternal on His sapphire throne, And, at His side, the Ancient of all days. Ah! wouldst thou know and sing them? thou must range From band to band of those blest hosts who throng The Paradise of God, and share their bliss. Ah! would'st thou know and sing them? thou must take Thy flight to regions of Eternal Night, And with the prisoners heave thy doleful sighs, And sound the æons of their dread despair.

But tho', to know its utmost mysteries, In vain the attempt man's eager thought might urge; And tho', its wonders, worthily to sound In song, earth's noblest eloquence were frail; Redeeming Love shall still my theme supply, Content that, when my best emprize be wrought, As unto one who stands upon the shore And looks far out upon the spreading main, Before me still shall stretch the vast expanse, And leave me in adoring wonder lost.

Eternal God! Thou whose omnific mind The glorious work contrived, whose matchless power The glorious work performed, O Thou, who reign'st, Hast reigned, and shalt for ever, on the throne Of absolute and boundless empery; Great King of kings and universal Lord! To whom, Thy praise resounding evermore, The heavenly choirs their tuneful strains address. Like to the rushing sound of mighty streams Commingling in their flow: to whom the voice Of all creation swells the ceaseless ode Still antheming Thy name: the organ tone Of wild sea-breakers beating on the rocks, The roar of hollow winds and blasts that sweep The mountain pines, and thunders bursting loud From low impending clouds; the heavy plash Of the resistless torrents as they foam And leap o'er giant crags: the murmurous hum Of inland brooks, and rivulets that glide Thro' open fields and deep embowered dells; The burr of wild bee sailing on the wing; The song of birds; the lowing of the kine; The plaintive bleating of the woolly flocks, That pasture on the hills: still joining all In one harmonious concert, that aspires To Thee to render homage; Thou, from whom Their song they learn; to whom their song they bring; Oh lend Thine aid, and pour Thy Spirit down, To lift my thoughts to rest on things divine, And all my heart inspire! that I may wake The harmonious breathings of a solemn lay, A song which, even as theirs, proclaims Thy praise, Hymning Thy best, Thy noblest work—still best Where all are good, grandest where all are grand,— Divinest still where all appear divine,—

Redemption, work of unexampled grace, Purposed, and wrought, and with great victory crowned!

How, first, arose the need? by what fell hap Came man to suffer that extreme of loss, That ruin absolute by which expense Of sacrifice unmeasured to the heart Of all-efficient Deity was wrought Recovery to achieve, my numbers tell!

"Let there be light!" startling the awful void, The mandate, irresistible, was heard; And from the void, to beauteous being, sprang That Eldest-born, diffusing wide the germs Of substance life and form, whence gradual grew, Thro' six prolific cycles, all the parts Which fashion forth Great Nature's spreading frame To be an image of her Maker's thought. He, with complacent eye serene, beheld His work advance, and as at every stage, It showed the reflex of His Perfect will. The witness of his word pronounced it good. Thus Day and Night, and Heaven and Earth appeared, The fruitful land and the wide heaving sea, The starry worlds and every living thing That wings the air, or sports amid the deep, Or wanders free, among the mountains lone, In forests wild or on the open plain. O, glorious handiwork, not made with hands! That whileas the stupendous fabric rose Adoring angels marvelled, and proclaimed, As with one voice filling all Heaven with praise, The triumphs of Almighty skill; how still, Throughout its wide extent, though now no more Aught but the wreck of all that erst it shone,— (Such havoc hath been wrought by human guilt,) — It yields a myriad tokens of the mind That planned, the potent will that gave effect To the design, and testifies the power, The wisdom and benevolence of God.

But lo! Creation's crowning triumph shown In man; man made in the similitude Of his Creator; not alone surpassing all Creatures, that live and move, in form and mien

And beauteous lineament; but nobly dowered With higher nature, and that quenchless soul Whose aspirations, yearnings infinite, Ave travelling beyond the sense, attest His origin and kindred both Divine. How as he roamed the bowers of Paradise. Upright in heart, joyous in innocence, And sharing his untainted bliss with her, His Maker gave for sweet society, His lovelier dearer self, Almighty love On him expended all its bounteous gifts! Not ours, in fancy's fairest reverie, To shape, tho' dim, a picture of those hours, Which, winged with joy, as bees with honey, flew, Scattering their wealth, o'er that unfallen pair. For genial was the clime wherein they dwelt, And peaceful were the feelings of their hearts. And pure the mutual love which held them bound In wedlock to each other, and sweet-fraught With satisfaction the unchecked delights Of soul and sense, by every object round, Awoke within them; while returning morn, Calm noon and gently gathering shades of eve, Brought them a rapture passing highest thought Of man conjectured since, a rapture found In childlike converse and communion, held With Him they loved as their Eternal Sire.

Such, in the golden infancy of Time, Was man; a creature formed for blessedness, The happy tenant of a happy world. Ah! had he stood obedient, as at first, Nor forfeited his bright integrity, How, in far diverse current, had the stream Of ages rolled, and with what other tale Had been inscribed the scroll of History! Had he but stood obedient! for this, As of all creatures else, the law which ruled The universal realm of God required. And, on his loyalty, a test imposed, Simple in character, nor hard to bear, So easy, that its simple terms have seemed, Full oft, a fitting target for the scorn Of scoffing atheists since: (so let them mock, Such ribaldry endures but this side death!)

Twas test which all its purposed end sufficed, To prove the worth or worthlessness of man.

Alas! how worthless, the grim visaged hour, Whose labouring womb, pregnant with every ill, Brought ruin and calamity to birth, Disclosed, when man of Evil tempted fell; Fell, not unwarned; for in his ear the law, Which claimed his whole obedience and in one The bound and safeguard of his liberty Prescribed, rang knell of danger and foretold Of penalty and doom the line transgressed.

But whence came evil? and temptation whence? With God, Great Source of Good, Prime Cause of all, How rose, amid His infinite domain. The fatal weed of Sin, beneath His eye E'er watchful to detect, beneath His hand With plenitude of power to uproot? Say, 'twas His long inveterate foe that sowed The tares among the wheat,—but how a foe In all His realms, who every creature made, And with exact foreknowledge of all use To which His creatures would address their powers? Was then the source of Good, the Author too Of Evil? Nay! such thought were blasphemy, Of Him conceived whose word hath Sin pronounced The abominable thing His soul abhors. Natheless existing, then of Him allowed For some predestined purpose; since without His will is nought, or was, or e'er can be. How utter vain all speculation here! Bearing the mind out far beyond her depth, Lost in unfathomed gulphs of mystery. Wise only they who, not too curious, shun To pry 'mong things, by God's high wisdom, left To mortals unrevealed; content to scan What truths His Word unfolds, and wait the end Of Time for revelation of the rest.

Nor wonder if, amid the ways of God, Of Him whose eye with universal range Surveys, whose mind, with all-embracing grasp, Spans the vast circuit of Eternity, Is much that baffles our short-sighted ken; Or if, with steps that neither haste nor halt, Unwearyingly to his predestined ends He moves, our human gaze be frail to pierce The awful clouds that gather round His path, Or track His way across the soundless deep. Couldst thou by searching find out God or know The Almighty to perfection, God were then Finite as thou, or finite thou no more.

Leave then, unguessed among the secret things His wisdom veils from sight, this hidden ken Of Sin's mysterious birth! Enough that Sin Is, and that man, from sin created free, Yet not incapable of sinning, sinned. O fatal fall! that in one moment dashed His bliss to atoms, and upon him drew. And upon Earth his dwelling, for his sake, Included in one heavy weighted curse, The total sum of creature miseries. Through all Creation, to her utmost bounds, Were felt unwonted pangs, as in her womb The fruitful seeds of Death, unknown before, Began to germinate, and half the bloom, From off God's whole material handiwork, Withered, and left it, like a blighted flower That flutters on its stalk amid the breeze, The piteous relic of its former pride. Dim grew the light of Heaven, her face o'ercast With sudden pallor; and the golden spheres, Hushing their music, a third part forsook Their places in the sky, nor on the brow Of Night, her crown adorning, glittered more. The Dawn that erst in naked beauty stept, Radiant as now the noontide hour, across The threshold of the day, in folding mists Draped her fair form and reddening, blushed for shame: While, smitten with strange fear, the sun, whose smile Had glanced unchanging summer o'er the scene. Began to shine with fluctuating beam, And, heat and cold alternating, among The months part sway to dismal Winter gave.

Then first, the wingëd hounds of tempest woke Within their hidden caves, and, rushing forth In rage, began to desolate the world.

Then first, those nurshing sons of Death, Decay

Mildew, Disease smote, with their hurtful breath, The scented shrub, green herb and fruitful tree; Nature began to droop, and the prime tints Of loveliness, that o'er her features spread, Faded and left her wan. Gay smiling fields, By sudden transformation, grew to wilds Darksome and drear; thistles and hateful weeds Sprang up in place of flowers; while many a bush That still in beauty bloomed, as tho' it feared Some deadly peril, for defence now clad Its every bough in panoply of thorns.

Nor less 'mong living creatures, direst change Ensued, as tho' the infection of man's guilt Had tainted all that breathe and made them vile. The sense of glad security, that reigned Throughout the wide domain of Being, fled. Strange instincts of ferocity and fear Warping their natures set the various tribes Of earth at hideous feud, and the fell feast Of universal ravin then began.

But most disordered, in a world deranged, Became the state of man. As, when the storm By northern blasts impelled, in fierce career Drives o'er the upland woods; from ebon clouds The lurid lightnings shoot their fiery tongues And shake the hills with thunder; flashes forth One forked flame of angrier glare, and smites Some lordly oak, the monarch of the grove, Of stateliest growth and ample breadth of shade, Which flourished, on an eminence apart, And, seen by dwellers in the vale below, Rejoiced the eye and gave to all the scene Its crowning glory; crashing to the ground Fall the rent boughs; and, riven in twain, the trunk Asunder flies; and pitilessly scorched, Shrivelled and bare of leaves, it stands the wreck Of all its former beauty; such was man Fallen from his height, stript of each attribute Of worth wherein his Maker took delight, And his soul blasted, shrivelled, scarred, by Sin, And every godlike lineament defaced.

No more in Eden, 'mong the untroubled scenes Of earlier happier hours, he now might dwell In satisfied content: but driven forth, With the companion of his shame, in pain And toil to roam the world, and earn by dint Of sweating drudgery his daily fare, He trod with outcast steps to banishment; No more, on his unwrinkled front, he bore The unstained image of his God; but grief, Remorse, anxiety deep furrows ploughed About his brows, and in his eyes, which erst Glanced upward most to heaven but now more oft Were ground-ward bent, woke many a woful look, That spake the language of deep misery: No more his taintless bosom was the home Of calm and holy thought, and feelings pure, And peaceful as the unruffled wave of some Wide lake which spreads, when the luxurious noon Of summer time hath lulled the winds to sleep, Nor strays one lightest wakeful breeze abroad; But grown corrupt and vile, its inmost springs Gushed foul and turbid; and, of Evil born, Arose the intestine feud of warring lusts And furious passions, raging each with each, For lawless lordship o'er the prostrate mind. No more in loving intercourse with God His soul communed; but overcome with dread Of wrath divine, which conscience felt deserved, His task was now, though futile the employ And drop of gall most acrid, 'mong the rest That tinctured his dire cup of wretchedness, To stifle, momently, the rising thought Which in him witnessed to his Maker's will

Nor less within his frame than in the womb Of his maternal Earth, wrought active Death; For, from that moment when contaminate Of sin he grew, his vital powers began To droop and gradual tended to decline; While wrought within his soul another Death, Of changeless and inexorable law, That banned all breach, the effect inevitable; Death, in divorcement from the Source of Life; Death, in estrangement from the Fount of Good; Death, in base thraldom to the Powers of Ill;

Death, in exclusion from all sympathy And correspondence of his heart with Heaven; Death, in the awful destiny which loomed Before him in a Future world, the abyss That yawned to engulph him at the bitter end.

Nor were the hydra ills which spawned of sin, And preved upon the happiness of Man, Like loathsome reptile swarms that glut their maw Upon some rotting carcase of the dead, Confined to that first pair, whose fatal deed Induced disturbance in the perfect frame Of Nature formed so fair. Predestined, ere The hour of their creation, to become The parent-stock of a wide-spreading race Whose tribes should fill the world and be the lords Of all else living; in themselves they bore The pristine type of their whole progeny, Which grown debased, of that same type partook, (Succession here of cause and consequence,) The unnumbered myriads of their issue. Nor Let any, in their atheist pride, arraign The justice of the Most High God for this, Or ask, why beings brought into this world By others' will, with nature warped by sin, Should be to God for sin accountable, And suffer through the forfeit of their sire? Not by the will of God, but guilt of man, The prime infectious taint was caused, and once Induced, by law which touches not alone The seed of man, but governs all the realms Of Being, the necessity of things, Which rules that all must propagate their kind. The utter offspring, generate of man, Of his corrupted nature needs partook. Wherefore be cavil dumb! or cavil else That the wild bramble doth not bear the grape, The prickly thistle yield the luscious fig, The serpent's egg hatch the huge elephant, The gadfly store up honey in the hive, For such were cavils all as rational As that which cries injustice upon God, That sinful race hath sprung from sinning Sire.

Behold, then, Man with all his progeny, As yet unborn, by one forbidden act,

Irrevocable, in the dismal gulfs Of ruin sunk, and, under righteous ban Of law, to still progressive ruin doomed Dread heritage of Everlasting Woe. Then, had not kindly Mercy interposed And swaved the counsels of the Highest, nought Had hindered but that sin had held unchecked, Abominable revel, to the tune Of ceaseless wail wrung from the world's despair; While 'mid the universal sigh and groan Of human agony, the heart of Hell Had swelled with glee, exulting o'er her prey. Then had the curse unmitigated reigned, And all of woman born, as here they trod, With sad reluctant steps, yet goaded on By unrelenting destiny, the path Which issues on the lurid swamps of Doom, Had jovless passed thro' scenes of life on earth By an unbroken desolation cursed, Had known no comfort to alleviate Their dreary lot, nor ray of hope descried Dawning upon their region of Despair, While in their minds no thought had risen, their breasts No feeling then had moved, a purer wave To moderate commingling with the tide Of vile imaginings and passions foul Which, like a sea of putrid filth, submerged Their souls and whelmed them in its loathsome deeps.

But He, who made man upright, and whose heart Of love upon the creature He had made, And made for His own glorious praise, was set, Forsook him not in this extreme of need, Nor left him impotent, the prey of Sin, To reap the harvesting of self-sown woe. With God, to witness human ruin, was To pity, and to pity was to plan, To plan was to accomplish, and upraise The human spirit from her lowest depths Of degradation and despair, and plant Her, glorious erst, more glorious than before, Triumphant on the sovran height of bliss. All-wise to purpose, and omnipotent To clothe His purpose in effectual act,

Sweeping obstructions from His path, as sweeps The Eastern wind the clouds that veil the blue And every star shines out, His attributes, Uniting in one mighty work, secured Redemption for the fallen sons of men, And from the scattered ruin, wrought by Sin, Upreared the stately edifice, restored To more than ancient grandeur, as my song Aspires to anthem in her following strains.

1868.

BOOK II.

REDEMPTION PROVIDED.

The Argument:—Apostrophe to Charity—Charity in Man a feeble type of Charity in God—The Charity of God as seen in Redemption—God's redeeming purpose—Wonder of the angels—Obstacles to the Redemption of men—God's purpose to redeem to be wrought out, through a Surety—The Divine Quest for a fitting agent—The Surety found in the Divine Son—Glorious results of the Surety's work foreseen of God—One link lacking supplied by the agency of the Paraclete—Song of Angelic Joy in Prospect of the Redemption of Mankind.

All Hail Eternal Charity! which reigned Supreme and hushed to calm, even in the birth, The strife that rose within the breast of God, When woke contention 'mong His attributes, Imperilling the Perfect Deity,
That while it loathed commiserated men,
Their glory vanished, and their powers by sin Defiled, and lying ruined by the Fall!
O Charity, or Love! (for by such name,
Though oft profaned, thou best art known of men,)
How beautiful thou art, seen even on earth
In thine imperfect workings, as thy home
Thou buildest in the heart by grace renewed;
How thou dost glorify and set a crown,

Of heavenly semblance, on the nature taught By thee to feel, and its pure feelings shrine In self-denying deeds to others shown, Blessing and making blest. Long-suffering, kind, Devoid of envy, vanity and pride, Offenceless and offences without guile Receiving, as she deems they ne'er were meant, Thinking no ill of any, and of none Provoked, rejoicing in no neighbour's fall, Deaf to the voice of slander and of all Believing, ave, and hoping still the best; Such is the loveliness of love, as, like A sheltering dove, within the Christian's breast She nestles deep and warm; and as he feels Her gentle flutterings stir his soul, his heart Glowing with kindly sympathies, and quick To feel for wants and sorrows not his own. Where on the bed of sickness burns the head Of fever, where, in hovels blank and chill, Shiver the ill-clad limbs of Poverty, Where, in the reeking dens of vice and crime, The wretched ill-starred outcasts herd and nurse Their wrongs and hatred of their fellow men, He bends his swift unselfish steps, his hand Dispensing bounty, lifting up the prone In woe, his words diffusing peace, like balm, And, wheresoe'er he moves, his presence felt Like sunshine breaking thro' the murky morn.

But though on earth ennobling Christian hearts She finds her sphere of action, still such love As this her inspiration borrowed ne'er From earthly source. Yet sweet is human love, Though nourished but at Nature's native springs, And stirred by impulse that is all her own. How beautiful the magic sympathy Which draws together two according minds, And binds them, each to either, by the links Of friendship's golden chain, as day by day They seek each other's dear society And share each other's thoughts, take fond delight In mutual converse, in each other's breasts The secrets of their hearts confide, and grow, From close association, moulded like

To like in harmony of feeling, brought Like mirrors to reflect each other's moods. How beautiful the wreath of love that twines In wedlock two young hearts and makes them one, Their joys, their aims, their interests the same, As living, bounding, beating each for each, E'en as the strings of some melodious lyre They throb with happy music. While beyond All human love beside, in beauty shows The gushing tide which rills up from the depths Of some sweet mother's bosom as, with fond Affection beaming in her eve, she doats Upon the baby nursling in her arms, And tends its pure warm slumbers. Yet how faint An image yields that mightiest, tenderest love, Or at the fount of Nature or of Grace Kindled, which glows within the human breast, Of the High Charity of God that wrought Redemption for the guilty, and among His glorious attributes most glorious shone, And showed to men that God Himself is Love.

Yea! God is love! Blest truth His word reveals. And by that oracle alone proclaimed, In tones which cannot be withstood, as on The Cross, where once redemption was achieved For sin-doomed men, she bids us look and learn The secret of His Being, that high love, Love which absorbs all attributes besides Into itself, forms the rare element Wherein He lives and acts, the essential soul Of every excellence that crowns Him God. Not but that bounteous Nature, many a trace And token of His loving kindness, yields. The genial sun, the fertilizing rain, The fruitful field, the vellow waving corn, The ripening orchard and the pastured flocks, And cattle on a thousand hills have each A voice all-eloquent that speaks to man, Of Him whose love rejoices all things round. Nor less the empire of His Providence Displays, among the dealings of His hand, The warm compassions of His heart to men. The unsleeping care which watches o'er our way,

The bounties teeming to supply our needs, The vital breath and buoyant health of frame, Continued day by day, give proofs of love No heedful mind will slur: vet not alone A kind demeanour, gentle aspect wears Or Providence, or Nature; but amid Their softer accents, harsher voices sound To fill the breast with terror; Furious storms, Fierce whirlwinds that uproot, tornadoes wild That sweep the prairie, lightnings that dart forth And fire the rick and homestead, wasting plague, Earthquake and hungry famine, with the ills Destructive of our joy, which daily haunt The painful steps of men, within the mind Wake contradiction of the thought that God Is Love, inspiring dread of His Great Might To scourge, consume and scatter. 'Tis the Cross, With its unbounded sacrifice, lays bare The vast love of His heart, and sheds a light Upon all mysteries to gild their gloom, Even where it not dispels, and lends a fringe Of glistening radiance to the angriest cloud.

Before the worlds, the prescient eve of God,-To whom all undeveloped issues lie Revealed, embraced in one Eternal Now.— Beheld the race of men as yet unborn, Severed from hope and helplessly ensnared Of Evil, and to dread perdition doomed. He saw, and all His boundless love was stirred To thwart their evil destiny, and pluck Them rescued from the net; and so o'er-rule The nature and necessity of things, That by the effect of law, which gave decree Sinners must be inevitably lost, They should be as inevitably saved. O most miraculous of miracles! Which ne'er inferior mind to His could find Within its scope to imagine; but devised, To compass with effect, must, to the bourne Of all resource, task even the energies Of His Supreme Almightiness; achieved,— No miracle beside remains to fill The astonished soul with wonder; not the birth,

From inconceivable vacuity
By will creative, of the sumptuous frame
Of universal nature; not the gift
Of life or its suspension; not the last
Surrender of things present to the void
From whence they sprung; nor that decree which wakes,
From long-forgotten sepulchres, the dust
Of all the generations of mankind,
And bids them live. For what transcendant act
Of Power Divine can make us marvel more,
Since God both possible and real hath made
The impossible, and, in His grace to men,
Reversed, by strict fulfilment, the decree
To sinning rebels big with the extreme of Doom?

Lo! as that purpose of Divinest Love In heaven was published, 'mong the shining hosts Of ministrants, circling the sapphire throne Supreme, strange wonder wrought, and shuddering awe Their spirits smote, trembling upon the verge Of terror, to conceive of what result Might follow, pregnant with disastrous change To God's unchanging nature, and the rude Disturbance of His reign, perchance complete Subversion of His sceptre, anarchy Of Being, shipwreck of the universe And absolute annihilation fallen Upon Creation's whole wide realm which, linked Indissolubly to His throne, endures Sole as that throne shall stand, from its firm base Removed must totter with it, and sink back To seething Chaos and abysmal nought, Should aught of failure cross His saving plan Convicting Him of weakness, voiding all Divine prerogative, and casting down His Godhead from its high supremacy.

And what, save failure, could they aught presage
Of that which His supernal counsels swayed
Mankind to succour? How could Power, tho' e'en
Almighty, reach the barriers to surmount,
Here its intent opposing? How could skill
Avail, tho' by Omniscient ken employed,
The tangled skein to unwind and find a clue
To mercy? And howe'er could Charity
Anticipate that here expanding field,

O'er which to roam at large, would greet her steps, Nor deem that, following in her track, would throng A troop of wild disorders, everywhere Sowing the seeds of α most fatal crop Of discord, born of lawless precedent, In weak indulgence shown to guiltiest man?

Yet well His angels knew the Most High God Could not be aught save just; but justice where, If sinners go unpunished? Well they knew His nature holy and without defect, But where the holiness abhorring sin, If human guilt unfrowned upon remain, His handiwork contaminating? Well They knew by one eternal law of right His acts were framed, but where the force of law, As binding other creatures, other worlds, If from its righteous operation men Should be exempt accounted? Were not this Inducement to transgress, in hope of grace Presumptuously indulged, held out to all The myriad populations habitant Of all the globes, and all the solar orbs Round which they constellate, and 'mong all ranks Of souls intelligent to gender doubt Of the unfaltering equity of God?

Nor less, their thoughts reverted to the doom, Shut out from every gleam of hope, wherein Lay mighty spirits plunged, once bright as they The flower of Heaven, their ancient comrades, friends With whom they shared the fellowship of love. And roamed the amaranthine bowers that bloom Eternal summer 'neath the smile of God; But whom foul guilt and horrible revolt Had ruined, and dragged down to endless night, Pursued by the irrevocable curse Of their Great Maker, and their natures changed From love to hate, inextricably bound, By adamantine fetters forged of Sin, To all that bears antipathy to God. Should law be waived and favour shown to men, How might these elder rebels justly mock At God's unequal judgments, and revile Nor without reason, His capricious ways.

Even as the children of some mechanist. Skilful alike to plan and execute, On the construction of a vast machine Of intricate and cunning workmanship Engaged, who to his workroom free access Grants them, as day by day his toil proceeds To watch him at his task; their little minds Wonder to mark the implements he wields, And each disjointed portion of the work As finished from his hands it comes; fine rod, Smooth plate, and twisted screw; piston and plug, And toothed wheel; and whispering each to each. They dubiously surmise what this or that May be, and to what use designed; for they, Untutored in their father's calling, fail To comprehend the details of his plan And their adjustment, all so clear to him; Until, the work complete, he sets the whole Machinery in motion, from them breaks A joyful shout of admiration; so Dubious, expectant and surmising much God's angels stood, while His redeeming scheme Unfolded to their view, incompetent, With all their guage of wisdom, to explore Of His unfathomed counsels the great deep. But as, in its completed symmetry It stood revealed, adoringly they smote Their harps, and overflowed the Heavens with praise.

For though 'twas veiled from their far reaching ken, To Charity's omniscient eager glance
That no expedient might escape, one way,
The only way appeared, whereby the loss
Of those her heart's compassions doated on
Might be retrieved. Could man but expiate
His guilt, as tho' that guilt had never been,
And from the heart,—the atoned offence erased
From Heaven's pure record,—an inviolate
Obedience yield to law's preceptive rule,
All ordinance fulfilling, what could bar
Free exercise of clemency, or brand
High God, acquitting man of sin, with taint
Or shadow of injustice? But ah! how
Should man, the finite, for the boundless wrong

Already done, wrong whose effects must reach To time's extremest limits, e'er atone? And how of sin made vile, his every act And impulse by the loathsome contact stained, E'er bring to God that fleckless righteousness, Law's sole approved observance? Ah, if thus Man only may be saved, then Man, alas! Unsaved stands doomed for ever!

I have seen,

Upon some raw and damp November morn, The mighty sunlight struggling to break forth, Through the thick veil of vapour that enwraps The earth, and makes the woods, the fields and streams Disconsolate; awhile the heavy gloom Prevails and mantles all things in its folds, But as the resolute orb half-way to noon His pathway gains, o'ermastering by his power The opposing mist, he bursts upon the scene, Scatters the brooding vapour wide, and shines Clear and undimmed, and in his orange light The landscape round a mellow aspect wears, Not splendid less, tho' soberer than the hue Which gilds her summer vesture; thus the Love Of God, All-Wise, thro' every veil, that hung To intercept her purpose from its end, Triumphant brake, and the disconsolate lot Of man illumined with a light, that shone Disclosing for his race a weal secured, Though diverse, yet not glorious less than that, Which gladdened erst his forfeit Paradise.

For tho' all impotent was guilty man,
Or to obey the law, or to atone
To law for disobedience, God saw
That could some fitting substitute be found,
Man's Surety to accomplish in his stead
The double work, one infinite as God
In nature, yet no less in nature man,
And in close union to mankind so bound
By mystic bonds, their oneness so complete,
That in the eye of law, the surety's deeds
Might justly be regarded men's, theirs his;
One who, tho' sinless, should of willinghood
Submit to charge himself with all the sins

Of all the world, and expiate their guilt
By boundless sacrifice; and who, above
The law, should bend himself to bear its yoke,
And serving all its precepts, earn the award
Of infinite merit, in whose worth the souls
Made one with Him might claim to share, then nought
Could interpose between mankind and grace,
Justice might, smiling, own the sacrifice,
Law quit the sinful for the Surety's sake,
All wrong repaired, and her whole end fulfilled;
Sinners might, then, be righteously forgiven,
And God's sweet mercy, shown them, justified
In sight of all created, and approved
Of His own judging mind, prime need of all.

But where the surety? Mong the myriad orbs Which stud the empyrean depths of space, Of what bright world the illustrious habitant? And to what race benign by birth allied, That, gifted with such faculty of power, His heart should yearn so tenderly to men? O'er the vast regions of His boundless sway, Traversed the all-beholding eye of God, But found her quest, nor where Earth's sister worlds Their circling planetary path pursue Round the paternal sun; nor where the sun Himself, with fostering tenderness, bestows His radiant rays to lighten and sustain With vivifying heat the globes that hang, Like courtiers round their monarch, pensioners Upon his royal bounty; nor where beam In beauty, clustered in their several signs, Each wearing her own diadem of light Upon her brow, the queenly company That constellate the zodiac; nor where The silver shining Pleiads, in a band Their virgin lamps enkindle; nor where gleam Orion's glittering belt and flashing sword; Nor where the Great and Lesser Bear, among The watchfires of the night, with hungry eyes Peer out upon the darkness; nor where burns With steadfast ray, high o'er the Arctic Pole, The star which points the mariner his course Across the surging main; nor where, beyond,

The nebulous glow of undiscovered worlds, Illimitable, to the wondering mind Of baffled science, speaks of realms that stretch Far out, with living secrets all their own, Her ken may ne'er unravel. Many a race Of glorious beings, gifted with high powers Of wisdom, will and might, and faculty Of love transcending human thought, and all To their Creator, loyal, 'mong the vast And varied populations of those worlds Complacently His eye beheld; but none, Of all their myriads, fitted to be charged With the grand errand of redeeming men.

Where then the Surety? In the Heaven of Heavens, Among the shining hosts that, round the throne Of God, perpetual minstrelsy employ Or wait upon His will, at his behest Ready to plume their pinions and speed forth From starry zone to zone? Along their ranks He glanced well pleased, as, in each radiant face, And beauteous form, the image He beheld Of His own glory shine. Here crowned with light. As with a diadem, the archangels seven Stood nearest with their wings outspread; above Hovered the glorious cherubim, and cried Continual praises to His name, loud praise Which, from the glittering pavement where they trod Beneath, each flaming seraph answered back, In Him their strength rejoicing. As when kings, In pride, before some foreign visitant Display their armed might, upon wide field, Legions on legions of their nation's flower Collect for mimic fight, a multitude Defying skill to count, so numberless In multitude, God's mighty angels spread Beneath His eye all-piercing, as it roved Seeking a surety for mankind. In grace, As at the first created, pure they stood, No stain upon their heavenly vesture dyed, And every heart responsive to His will, E'en as the strings of well-tuned lute, that throb With music at the minstrel's lightest touch; Yet here they failed requital of his quest, Failed not in loyalty, but failed in power

And faculty to undertake the work On which His heart was set, a work whose vast Proportions mocked their utmost enterprise, And that of all created energy.

Where then the Surety? Must the purpose born Of God's amazing love abortive prove, Because, meet agent to perform His will, Not all the illimitable worlds nor even High Heaven herself containeth? Then were God Convict of frustrate wisdom, frustrate might, And that which shone His sovereign diadem, His glory, by the shade of dimness crossed, Though wavering but an instant, had no more Him crowned, God over all. But no! There yet One Being was, and only one, by whom, To Him the delegated work assigned. Of mercy contemplate, for men's behoof, It might be, to its unfrustrated end, Triumphantly pursued, and human guilt In Him atoned, the Charity of God Be manifest, supreme in righteousness.

Of old Eternity, ere Time was born, Or aught created, or of matter wrought, Or finer spiritual frame, the mandate heard, Which called to sentient life; the Most High God. Of His own Love, mysteriously begot And with His sovereign attributes endowed His Son, His soul's delight. In Him, He saw The pure effulgence of His Glory shine; In him the illustrious counterpart beheld Of His own nature, character and will; To Him co-ordinate empire with Himself He gave o'er all His purposed works, and passed Decree that, as Himself, all beings else Should bring their homage to the Son and own Him with the Father one, co-equal Lord; By him Creation's whole stupendous frame He fashioned forth, of Filial Deity Sublime accomplishment, the agent He, Whose will, whose power, whose voice resistless gave Fecundity to the wide-wombed void, And from the shadowy gulfs of Chaos sprung, In beauty vestured and her myriad veins Pulsing with life, the concrete universe.

Behold the Surety for mankind! For back, From her far-travelled quest, returned, the eve Of God, all-seeing, rested on the Son With glance of love paternal. In the depths Of His translucent soul the imaged thought Of mercy shone reflected, as a star, Which mirrored on the placed midnight breast Of summer ocean, up to Heaven again Looks back the steadfast light it borrows. In His breast, whate'er contention for the sake Of mortals moved the Father's heart, was stirred A corresponding strife, and, how to save, Filled all His mind, revolving o'er and o'er God's purposes of sovereign grace to men. To be Himself the Saviour; Infinite, His Godhead with our manhood to conjoin; High Lord of law, for us the law to serve; Sinless, for us our guilt to expiate, And give effect to all that mercy planned, His heart of pity prompted; and His will Expressed, His sacrifice accepted, Love Exultingly presaged that all was done.

And all was done! For to the Prescient Mind And will omnipotent of God, for aye, What He in thought hath purposed standeth sure; And, as the spreading landscape, from some height His steps have gained, the traveller surveys. Embracing all the features of the scene, Illumined by the noonday sun, even so The whole extended tract of Time, with all The features of its diverse History, Chances and changes wrought of all event. Their color and complexion from the work Of Grace devised, deriving, lav outspread Beneath the Omniscient gaze of Deity. He saw through ages darkened with the clouds Of men's misdeeds and their resulting woes; He saw the tribes of men, with painful steps, Their pathway from the cradle to the grave Wending, begirt with ignorance and crime, Strife, slavery and oppression, and bent down Beneath the burden of the primal curse; He saw the mighty empires of the world.

Each born of fraud and wrong and growing up To their maturity of pride and strength, Then overgrown of that they fattened on, Smit with disease and sinking in decay; He saw, far down the avenues of Time, The Surety's cross upreared, and with the light Of love irradiated, flinging forth Its beams of beckoning hope to gild the gloom Of all the weary antecedent years; He saw, 'mid tears and blood and sacrifice, The harvest sown of man's regenerate bliss. And, neath the immediate shadow of the Cross, Upspringing from the crimsoned soil, the flower That bloomed with pledge of unimagined good, Unmixed with evil, to the ransomed world: He saw the Cross its gradual triumphs win, Flooding the Future with its broadening beams, And penetrating to the farthest shores Of Earth; with burning radiance withering up The noxious growth of guilt, till every land, . Wearing the pristine hues of Paradise, Creation's travail o'er, and every soul Of man made pure and happy, earth adorned With beauty for her spousals, like a bride, Her whole redemption wrought to His high Praise, Her scenes disclosed the counterpart of Heaven.

Yet lacked one link; the mystic bond to bind The Surety in close union with the souls For whom He gave Himself their sins to bear. How vain the sacrifice, unless of men Accepted as of God! Should they decline His proffered intervention, spurn His love, Refuse the ransomed heritage and mock The overtures of grace, ah what can save? What hinder, but that Sin should triumph still In human ruin, Hell her ravening maw Glut with her awful prey, and all the work Of man's redemption, at such priceless cost Achieved, be thwarted of its cherished aim. Like misplaced labour barren of result? So, when upon the sands, at ebb of tide, Some sportive child of gathered shingle builds His plaything walls and mounds, and calls his friends To look on what, with such fantastic pains, His little hands have fashioned; in an hour, The foaming waves, returning on the beach, Scatter his infant handiwork, and when, With the next ebb of tide, with eager steps He thither hies, with angry glance he sees The sea hath wasted all and left no trace.

Thus the Redeeming work of Love, alas! All vainly had been wrought, for of the race Of men, purblind of sin and swollen with pride, Not one, for Saviour, had the Surety owned, But that the Almighty Father well foreknew The extent of our apostacy, and so Ordained the course and issue of events, That He, who dwelt the darling of His heart, Himself denying to repair our loss, Should nought be plundered of His due reward. By a divine, unalterable decree,— (In number multitudinous, known to God Alone,)—the souls of men, elect, were given The Saviour for His Own, to rescue, rule And glorify for ever with Himself. Upon their hearts to move, the Paraclete,— (Who reigns the third on Heaven's triarchal throne. One with the Father and the Son, by whom The life, light, knowledge emanate from God To creatures are transmitted,)—pledged His power, Their minds, of error darkened, to illume. Their haughty pride to humble, and to rend The adamantine chains that held them bound Captive of evil, and that faith to inspire In their great Surety, which to Him should bind Them, one in sympathy, delight and love, Made one with Him, as He is One with God.

So, in the counsels of the Triune God, His Love triumphant gloried, and, in one Great purpose, all His attributes combined To re-create what Evil had destroyed, And worst the work of ruin. As the vast Design in its completion stood revealed To His angelic armies bright, though frail Their keen intelligence to comprehend Its complicated mysteries, (frailer far,

Howe'er ambitious tuned, my song to sing,)—Yet, seeing the anticipated end, And all the accruing glory of their King, Intenser rapture stirred them, every voice High praises anthemed, every golden harp Rang louder in full-volumed symphony.

All Glory in the Highest, endless Praise, Homage of every creature, Lord be Thine For Thou art worthy! All ye Powers adore! Adore, ye heavenly princedoms, Him your King, Whose manifolded wisdom, goodness, grace Thoughout His boundless realms create, ye scan; In man recovered, mightier manifold; In height above all thought, unfathomed depth! Wonder, ye constellated orbs that stud With light the limitless expanse, and, while Ye wonder, jubilate His praise, who gives To all your joyful nations surer joy, Your living populations vital pledge Of quenchless being, incontestible, Whose hand hath plucked the spoil from anarchy, And on the neck of Evil, overthrown. Chained down to rise no more, His footstool based. Praise Him, thou ransomed Earth and to the height Of gratulation lift thy voice, declare His Name, Thy Ransomer, with all thy tongues; Polluted in thy guilt, a breath had swept Thee from thine orbit to Eternal Night, Nor His high throne had trembled, nor a star Had pined, nor, on her steadfast course intent, One solitary world had from the sky Ta'en note of thy departure; but His Love, Which saves, now glorifies thee and all eyes Of countless orbs are on Thee, beaming joy.

All Glory in the Highest, endless Praise, Homage of every creature, Lord be Thine, For Thou art worthy! Who is like to Thee? Pavilioning Thy throne in Majesty, Thou bendest down from that supremest height Thy meanest work regarding. To create The peopled universe, or fill a globe Of dew with atom-swarms of life, is one To Thee; but lower stooping, Thou, the pure,

On loathed pollution lookest down to cleanse. And stooping show'st the crown of Majesty. Vea. Thou art worthy! Who is like to Thee? Serene in awful wisdom ;-Mind whence springs The boundless knowledge which it self-infolds. Dim secrets hid from archangelic ken Thine eye interrogates and all is light, And light to Thee Thy purpose to redeem, Though wombing undeveloped mysteries, Whose lore to learn, Immortals wishful wait. Yea, Thou art worthy! Who is like to Thee? Girt with effectual sovereignty of Power, Life in thy thought, creation in thy will; But overpassing all creative might, As men redeeming, from profoundest death, Eternal death, Thou to Eternal life Dost raise them and with deathless honor crown. Yea, Thou art worthy! Who is like to Thee? Thy Being, one eternity of Love; A love enshrined within thy veiled mind, As in her sanctuaried, deep recess; A love diffused abroad in all Thy works, Unslumbering influence ceaseless winged with good, And sympathetic with the throbbing life That warms each sentient individual frame, Howe'er minutely fashioned; love undreamed, Immeasurable, as in itself it folds A universe, immeasurable more Embracing man, man guilty, and his guilt Folding for ever out of sight: to what Remote retreats of guilt, beyond the bourne Of all conjecture, may not such a love, Hereafter, stretch its pitying arms and fill Earth, Heaven and Hell with fresh astonishment?

All Glory in the Highest, endless Praise,
Homage of every creature, Lord be Thine,
For Thou art worthy, and to Thee shall flow
Fresh streams of confluent praises still for aye!
All Praise to Him, the Great Invisible,
Whose was the matchless purpose; Praise to Him,
The visible brightness of His Glory, whose
The self-surrendered will, the efficient power;
And Praise to Him, the Paraclete, who crowns

Power, will and purpose with ordained effect!
Co-operate, consentaneous Three in One,
Redeeming, Tri-une God, all Glory, Praise
And Homage Thine be rendered, Thine both now,
And on through all predestined Time, beyond
Love's consummated triumph, evermore.

1871.

BOOK III.

REDEMPTION PROMISED.

The Argument:—The delay of Redemption—Modern theories of Developement—The Redeeming Work analogous to the Creative—A Hint of Divine purpose with men from the beginning—The promise to the first sinners—The rapid growth of Evil in the world—Picture of the Deluge—Condition of those who perished, not without hope—The world re-populated—Degradation of the Race—Rise of Superstitious Worships—The renewal of the promise to Abraham—The prophecy of Jacob—The Mosaic types and sacrifices—The growth of the Messianic expectation among the Jews—Glimpses of the Revelation afforded to the Gentiles—The close of the Prophetic Dispensation.

Ah! Whither hast thou voyaged, O my soul? To what far height, borne on the venturous wing Of song, hast thou essayed to soar? height ne'er By human mind attained! For who can search The counsels of the Almighty? Who can gaze Upon the unveilëd, primal Fount of Light, Nor shrink back paralysed and scathed? Descend, Timely descend! No eagle optic thine To dare the blinding beam, nor eagle strength To bathe unscorched amid the waving light. Faint, faint the glimmer of that awful ray Serene, which shows His counsels to Himself Irradiate with keen lustre, He who sees

The end as the beginning hath disclosed To mortal vision. Leave, ere thou art lost, Like helmless bark upon a shoreless sea. Those trackless realms of mystery. Return To Thine own scene of sojourn, and inspire Thy native element; here ample scope For wonder thou shalt find, as on firm ground Thou standest, 'mid the theatre which saw, Of these unfathomed counsels grown to fruit, The purposed miracle of Love achieved.

Achieved, yet how mysteriously delayed! Ages on ages roll, and of the event Impatient grows the groaning earth, and still The day-spring, winged with mercy to mankind, Her drowsy pinions droops and spreads no plume To wave away the night. But never yet Save by unhasting process of sure growth, From the first seminal implanted germ, Successive, up to ripe maturity, Did God effect His purpose. Science tells, As poring on the rocks, with vague research, The story of creation, written there In cipher, she laboriously spells out, Letter by letter, like a child at school Bewildered by his lesson, that the world Not all at once was made the meet abode For man its destined lord. A million years, (Millions perchance) elapsed ere the rude mass Of molten elements congealing formed The solid globe, a million more ere, clothed With blossomed vegetation, earth beheld Her living tribes, though of the lowest type Of sentient being; nor until, thro' all The tardy stages of developement, The Sovereign Worker had His great design To ripe completion brought, was born the Man To consummate the whole. And if indeed, This Oracle of Science utter sage And sober truth, tho' but half guessed, and not Jargon and babblement unworthy heed, Like some deluded prophet grown deranged, Then who can wonder if a like delay Forerun redemption, or gainsay if God,

Still mindful of gradation, by a chain Successive of events, through many an age Of long development to ripeness wrought, By slow degrees press onward to His Work.

Yet, from the first, some beams of promise shone Upon the desolate paths of humankind, Bright with the scintillations of a hope Pavilioned in the Future. Evermore, Upon the shadowy page of Time was writ In mystic characters by God some hint Of His Divine intent; and thro' the veil Of darkness, howe'er dense, which curtained o'er The vision of deliverance, heedful eyes Beheld, tho' dimly glimmering on their view, A light prophetic of the distant morn To rise at length, and gild the gloomy scene, And fill the world with gladness. Even as when At night, while o'er the wave no breath of air Is wafted, and all moveless hangs the sail, With painful labour spent, the rowers still Tug at their heavy oars, not all uncheered Because the harbour lights tho' far away Signal the wished for port, so, whileas yet The mighty ages, sea-like spread and dire The curse of Evil born prevailed, and long Redemption tarried, not all lorn of joy Was man, as in his breast expectancy Awoke with many a token Heaven vouchsafed Of the predestined Saviour's coming day.

Lo! where in Eden stand the guilty pair,
Cowering abashed with terror and with shame.
Trembling to hear the awful words pronounced,
Their penalty adjudging, ere they pass
From those fond scenes of innocent delight,
Ne'er to return and dwell among them more.
Severe the sentence, as, in tones that thrill
Their souls with icy dread and wither up
Their joy, it strikes upon their ears, a knell,
(Precursor in advance of many since
Tolling the death of mortals,) big with doom;
Yet, while to each their separate share of ill,
Fruit of their joint offending, it assigns,

Sorrow to him in painful toil, to her
In throes of childbirth, and to both again
In the sore travail of a suffering world,
Tempering its stern severity, it breathes
An inextinguishable hint of hope,
A prophecy, whose purport dawning dim
Upon their vision, yet forbids despair,
As not on them the condemnation falls
Weighted with heaviest woe, but on the Power
That snared them and their loyalty o'ercame,
Telling of fatal bruise that Power should wound,
Inflicted of one named the Woman's Seed.

So they passed forth to exile, in their woe Not all unsolaced, as they felt at heart The God they had offended and whose wrath Their guilt had well deserved, in kindness still Regarded them, and while he judged forebore To avenge their trespass to its height. Hence grew The instinctive prayer for mercy, hence the rites Of simple worship day by day performed, And hence the offered sacrifices slain On their rude early altars. Down the dim And dusky avenues of Time, afar They strained their eager vision, and a glimpse Obtained of that enduring sacrifice, Their own frail offerings faintly shadowed forth, Whereby the Champion Seed should triumph win: And in anticipative trust they found A medicine for their anguish. Evermore, Whileas the years increased and round them grew Their sons and daughters, parents of the race To populate the world, and whileas care With each returning morn awoke to plough Some wrinkle in their foreheads, and each eve The experience of the day suffused their eyes With tears of sorrow born, yet, like a star Of promise shining on the path which led Their footsteps slowly onward to the grave, Lived in their thoughts remembrance of the word Which knelled in Eden the destroyer's doom. And they, in comfort of that hope, were glad.

And, after them, this hope no less sustained The chosen few, who, 'mid the growing guilt

Of humankind, through mercy lived to God. To endure, what else all unendurable Had been, the sickening spectacle of sin. A dragon wearing her most loathsome form. Unchecked pursuing, in the mid-career Of triumph, her fell orgies. For with speed That far outran the rapid growth of men To people earth, grew human wickedness To fill it with pollution; and not long The lapse of time, ere of the primal fault Were gendered crimes a monstrous progeny, Tracking men's fated steps all-where by day, Nor leaving undisturbed their sleep by night, But haunting still their dreams. The eye of Heaven, Amazed, beheld the havoc everywhere Spreading contagion, and the hideous sight Of creatures God had made, an atheist race, Unbridled by one heaven-imposed restraint, Seeking their good from evil, vying who Among them all might distance still the rest In vile enormity. Conjecture fails To shape from all our human annals since,— Tho' lurid burns the record which they bear Of men's most monstrous deeds,—an image meet Of that the world had grown to, had not God, In anger, interposed his power to stem The torrent of corruption. To destroy That eldest race of sinners, and of one God-fearing household left among them all, The world to people with mankind anew, Even to His Love, which could no more forbear With men grown fiendlike in their guilt, remained The sole expedient, and at His command Whelming the world, the awful deluge came.

But who shall paint the appalling scene, when forth (The floodgates of the hidden deeps unlocked,) The unimprisoned waters rushed and wreathed Their seething foam-belt round the shrieking globe? From black marmoreal folds of gathered cloud, Which like some deadly twisted snake, enwound The atmosphere, half-stifled in the grasp, Poured the fierce torrents down. From secret caves Under the piled mountains, where they slept

Darkly imbedded since Creation's birth, Awoke the pent-up streams, and tossing high Their struggling arms, cleft the hoar hills in twain, And ran along the gorges to the plains, Commingling there with hideous roar, as when Barbarian hosts, in furious battle, meet And the wild fray begins. From the huge wells Beneath the central ocean which contain Her mighty reservoirs, bursting their bounds, Seas upon seas rose swelling, heaving high Their billowy surges, and in mad pursuit Of one another's footsteps leapt the rocks, Upclomb the cliffs and, spurning every bar, O'er island region and main continent Tumultuous swept, till one vast waste of waves Had blotted out all vestige of the land. And Earth hung corpse-like 'mong the living spheres Of Heaven, the Ocean round her for a shroud.

Small space was then for the doomed race of men, (Or congregated in their towns they plied The arts of luxury, or where, remote From concourse, they the glebe upbrake or watched Their pastured flocks and herds,) to seek escape From the relentless flood; scarce even to lift The supplicating glance to ireful Heaven, And utter forth the poignant wailing cry For mercy long despised. For swift, as when, While drives the hurricane, the lightning flash Ignites the standing corn, the harvest field Shoots up a sudden flame, that deluge burst Upon them unprepared. A moment scared They saw the angry billows rolling on, The next, upcaught by the advancing waves, The foaming whirlpools tossed them round and then, Choked by the surge, they sank into the deep To rise alive no more. Yet, 'mid the wreck Of Nature, undestroyed, above the flood, Wherein those myriads found a watery grave, Floated secure the world's Great Hope enshrined Within the ark which bore the eight elect Of humankind, preserved to keep alive The race of men on earth. A hope not theirs Alone, but destined, when the ripe hour came,

To rise on them that perished, when the Lord In spirit through the dungeon gates of death Past, bringing life, and in the gloomy hold Preached mercy to the souls imprisoned there.

That judgment o'er, the waves their wrathful task Accomplished, back within their ancient bounds Retired, like leopards satiate with their prev To slumber in their lair. Once more the Earth Renewed her beauty and her bloom, and hill And vale, wide forest, bald bleak mountain peak, Majestic river, running brook and sea, Displayed her features varied as of yore, While, with the flight of years, her living tribes Their numbers multiplied, and of mankind, Sprung from the relic in the ark preserved, Again successive generations born Resumed the old predominance o'er all The creatures else around them, and beneath Their empire subjugate ordained of God, Ah! might that deluge but have washed away The plague of sin from this fair globe, and purged Her horrid taint! But no! the warning given No longer lived, than while its awful voice Commingled with the roaring flood, and sank To silence, from the dull oblivious ear Of human memory, with the sinking wave. For as some noxious stream, which takes her rise Among the fetid pools that lie concealed Deep in the dark impenetrable recess Of forest-maze untrodden, and by stealth Flows, hiding from the glance of day-light, sheathed By treacherous jungle of empoisoned plants, And, as she flows collects the deadly juice Of fallen leaves and branches lying rank And rotting by her side, and winds her course. Polluted and polluting, to discharge Far o'er the distant plains the horrid breath Of epidemic plague, so stealthily, From the dim depths of man's deceitful heart, Rose sin once more corrupting humankind, And pouring o'er the earth a growing tide Of pestilential crimes and vices fraught With utter wretchedness and death to men.

All uncongenial were the task to trace How, from disordered human nature, grew Each cankering blight that on the tree of life Nipt all the buds of joy, destroyed all fruit Of happiness, as raged all monstrous lusts And fiend-enkindled passions, goading men To foul abuse of kindly Heaven's best gifts. To hateful envy of each other's good, To falsehood, fraud and murderous cruelties. Dark-scowling hatreds, maddening broils and war's Death-dealing havor and fierce butcheries. Phrensied ambition, spirit-freezing pride, Lewd sensualisms, unclean adulteries, Abominable incests and the whole Fell herd of crimes, offspring of guilt, which stamp Their hideous hoof-prints over all the field Of History, and Earth's long record make A tale of obscene horror unrelieved.

Small wonder if, amid the revelry Of crime wherein their souls ran riot, men Estranged themselves from Him whose holiness Their every action outraged. Natheless lived Within them still the instinct of His Power Supreme, which fashioned all things and sustains; But, with the soul and sense alike deprayed, No longer able to conceive Him pure, The Good, the Holy, the All-Perfect One, The kind and bounteous Sire of all that live. Dwelling and reigning in Eternal Love. Distorted to their sin-distorted minds The intuition of His Being grew. While, in their guilty dark imaginings, They clothed Him with the awful terrors born Of conscience-stricken Fear, or pictured Him Else one in nature Evil like themselves. As their corrupt desires would have Him be. So, self-deluding and deluded, spread Bewilderment among them, whence emerged A thousand mythic monster-breeding creeds. Peopling Earth, Air and Heaven with frenzied Powers Antagonist to men, a multitude Wielding capricious empire o'er their fate, Fiend-gods, whose devilish malice to appease They wrought strange rites of kindred devilry.

But, when the deepening shades of Error spread Had, like the ebon pall of Night, enwrapt The universal mind of man and quenched The last faint glimmer of the radiant hope. Which God primeval gave, His purpose shone Anew, in special revelation made To the ancestral Hebrew, as with heart That hungered after God, he could not brook Chaldea's idol-worship. Him, the Grace Of the Most High distinguished; on his ear. Enraptured of the sound, the accents fell Which spake the Living God, and shaking off, At Heaven's command obedient, every tie Which else had bound him to the idol-faith Wherein his youth was nurtured; for reward, To him the ancient promise was renewed Of that Pre-destined Seed should bless the world. Renewed in language clearer than before. And his own offspring gloriously assigned.

Thenceforth, among his favoured progeny, The memory of that gladdening promise given Was cradled up with care, and evermore, Nourished by fresh revealings from on high, Their expectation ripened. While the dark, Which dense o'erhung the nations, denser grew With thickest gloom; shone out with brighter ray The broadening light that beamed on Israel's path, Leading them onward to the perfect day Whereof their hope lent presage. Thus when spent With age, old Jacob on his deathbed lay, In that far land washed by the Nile's broad flood Where Providence had brought him, as around Their reverend sire his sons stood grouped to attend His dying will, and hear his voice pronounce A blessing on them, they beheld the light Of inspiration burning in his eye, While on the chosen head of Judah lay The attenuated hands, and from his lips Welled forth prophetic utterance which told Of glory should accrue to Judah's line, Of royal sceptre long maintained and law Delivered to his brethren, governance Leaguing them to his sway, while age on age Should follow till the destined Shiloh came,

To whom, their king, all nations should be drawn. A prophecy which in the dismal years Succeeding, when these too had joined their sire In the dim slumberous realm of death, and when Their children groaned beneath the alien yoke Enslaved of the Egyptian, 'mong their crushed And injured tribes, kindled the aspiring dream Of tyranny o'erthrown, and severed bonds, And a triumphant exodus achieved.

And thus again, their dream fulfilled, their necks Released from the oppressor's loathed voke, As in their long march o'er the wilderness Their hosts emancipated held their way, By the great patriot Levite, champion-led, To him of God the mystic rites were given, In many a type and figure, shadowing forth The destined Saviour and His wondrous work. The Paschal victim on the altar slain: The scape-goat, laden with imputed sin Led forth into the desert; the High Priest, Clad in his robes pontifical, alone Passing within the veil, the atoning blood To sprinkle and with perfumed rite to raise His interceding voice to Heaven; and all The sacerdotal pomp of sacrifice, Purgation, offering, worship for a law Prescribed among them, and observance due Exacting at their hands, and fenced about With direst penalties upon neglect, But contemplated one divine design, To adumbrate, in scenic symbolled show, Messiah and His mission, and impart To the believing worshipper, though dim, A glimpse of the Redemption to be wrought Of God, towards which the years were labouring on.

And thus, too, in their days of settled strength, Those palmy days when to the goodly land Their God had brought them, and upon their arms His blessing rested, as puissant they Routed the heathen, drave them forth, as drives The October hurricane the leaves and strips The forests naked of their pride, possessed

Their strongholds and the name of Israel made A terror 'mong the nations, evermore Upon some gifted seer in prophet-trance The burden fell, the message of the Highest, Lifting in part the veil of distant Time, And, in immortal flame-apparelled words, Proclaiming all the splendour that should wrap The world when dawned the Messianic Age, And when Messiah on His throne should stretch His sceptre o'er the nations, and from sea To sea, and shore to shore, an ample tide Of good on all should from benignant Heaven Flow down to men, blessing and making blest.

'Mid all their vari-coloured history, This light of prophecy was ne'er withdrawn. Whileas their judges ruled by law and still Their tribes were free; and when with idiot hands They put their freedom from them, and ordained A king to reign, and bowed their servile necks In voluntary subjection; and when grew Among them all the ills that kingship breeds Wherever kings bear sway; and when, at length, The kingly canker eating out their life Deprayed, corrupt and faithless to their God, His hand He lifted to chastise their guilt, And the invader came, subdued, and bore Their households captive to the alien land; And when by bitter banishment reclaimed, Once more, tho' with diminished strength and shorn Of half their glory, to their native land He brought them back, moving their captors' hearts Relenting at their woe to grant release,— Still one by one, in undissevered line, Seer followed seer, singing their mighty songs, Reaching a rapture of poetic height, Despair and envy of all poets since, Songs, in their all-commanding breadth of sweep, That ranged o'er every cadence, every tone Of feeling, passion, ecstacy, songs all, Still breathing one grand burthen, ringing out In choir of gathering volume the clear voice Of Hope, a hope whose keen transported eye Outran the years, concentrating her gaze On the far glories of Messiah's day.

Thus, age on age, with Israel still survived The ancient promise of redemption given, Still pointing their anticipative gaze To a prepared event, a time to be, And Him their pation's one desire, who sent Of God should come a Saviour to redeem, A Prince to reign, a Champion to redress, A Breaker to uproot, o'erturn, destroy Oppression, wrong, iniquity and war, Finish transgression, make an end of sin And bring back Eden to a forfeit world. Nor wholly unto these the glad desire, Born of prophetic promise, was confined; But evermore, upon the night that held The nations round, some glimmering ray would shine From the bright star of truth in Israel's sky. And, here and there, descried of souls devout Amid the darkness feeling after God. Left them not wholly barren of some glimpse, Tho' dim and cloudy, of the approaching day When that great sun, which should o'er Israel rise, Should be a lamp to light the Gentiles too; So near some festal hall ablaze with light, Tho' mingling not with the festivity Of those within, the outside stranger yet, Through doors ajar and open windows, gains Stray glimpses of the splendour of the scene; And so, when in some mighty temple-fane The crowd for special worship met, above Them roll the waves of organ harmonies, A mile off in the valley on his way, The passing traveller hears the solemn sounds, Though by the distance softened and subdued, And feels their music welcome to his soul.

At length, in all its stately symmetry,
The rainbow arch of heavenly promise shone
Complete, spanning the world. The last grand bard
Hymned high the notes of His prophetic strain,
And in the glow of nearer vision saw
The rosy day-spring break; beheld the Sun
Of righteousness with healing in his wings
Arise, and Him, whom every type had shown
And every ringing prophet voice had sung,
With sudden footstep to his temple come.

A solemn pause ensued. No further sound From Heaven was heard, no further ray outleapt, No need of revelation more to apprise Man's favoured race of God's divine intent; All for the Saviour's coming was prepared, And Earth, on tiptoe, waited with desire The jubiletic hour that should bring Redemption to her sons; even as a bride, Long ere the dawn awake, expectant waits The lagging light that brings her spousal morn.

1874.

BOOK IV.

REDEMPTION ACHIEVED. (FIRST PART.)

THE ARGUMENT: - The Hour of Christ's Birth-Wonder of the angels at the Divine Humiliation-Marvel occasioned by it to the Powers of Evil-The Massacre at Bethlehem-Preparation of the Redeemer for His Mission-His Perfect Childhood-Visit to Jerusalem-The Ministry of John the Baptist-The Baptism of the Redeemer-The Sign from Heaven-Flight into the Wilderness-The Temptation—The Saviour's Ministry and Teaching -The Fatherhood of God-The Brotherhood of Man -The True Service of God-The Nature of the Blessed Life-The Future State-The Invitation of His Love-The various reception given to Christ's teachings—The Hatred of many—The Jewish hope of a martial Messiah—The Redeemer's Miracles the seals of His Mission—His Cross the absorbing aim of His Life.

O Hour immortal! that to mortals gave Their long expected Saviour; fairest thou Of all the teeming progeny of Time! Thy radiant advent antheming, what notes Of angel minstrelsy were thine, that night The shepherd watchers on the breezy wold, Which shadowed slumbering Ephratah, beheld The congregated hosts of Heaven come down, And heard their congregated voices peal, In choir exulting, "Glory in the highest To God, and Peace on Earth, Good-will to men!"

And well might angels, following in the wake Of their high Monarch, hasten to the scene Of his predestined triumphs, there to gaze With eager eye on the puissant deeds Whereby He should the ruffian horde of Hell O'ercome and from the depths of ruin lift The sons of men to glory, and arrayed In sacerdotal pomp, the World's High Priest, Should greatly for the world's great guilt atone, Should end all sin, obliterate all ill, And Man's primeval Paradise restore,

But what undreamed of marvel meets their view? No sudden triumph here; no terror spread 'Mong routed demons; no swift-leaping joy Thrilling Earth's languid pulse; no cleaving shout Of jubilance from all her nations, tribes Uprising; no unwonted heavenly beams Illumining the altar-steps whereon The stately Pontiff offers sacrifice; But lo! as one of all his glory shorn, His Deity disguised, the Christ of God Enters the outcast world he comes to save, Heir to whatever ill its meanest state Can fashion forth from penury and woe, And like Shame's wretched offspring, outcast-born.

Where the rude hovel to the folded kine Yields nightly shelter, lo! a peasant girl Is watching o'er the slumbers of her babe, Lying uncradled in a feeding-trough And 'mong the fodder couched. Behold the type Of man's extreme necessity, extreme Weakness, dependence, want, exposure here! And is it thus the Great Deliverer comes? And can discerning spirits from the height Of empyrean glory, downward borne

To earth in glad expectant flight, descry In this frail human waif of meanest birth. Launched on the surging current of the years, This poor despisëd child of Penury, Aught of similitude to Him whom erst Their tribute-service homaged, praise adored? Where, in that helpless infant arm, the power That rolls the worlds along? Where in that brain Unconscious, undeveloped, the deep ken Of counsels framed by an Omniscient Mind, And that mysterious plan by Love designed To baffle anarchy and save the world? No token here displayed of Deity; No promise of Redemption here fulfilled. Exult, ye whilom trembling fiends, exult! If this be your defeat, then wears defeat The semblance of a triumph. Heaven hath sent Her awful King to tread you down and sweep Yours powers to desolation, and behold, Your foe for ages dreaded comes in guise That well may seem a targe for your disdain, Your laughter, a weak babe of Woman born.

But while the holy angels stood amazed, To mark the self-abasement of their God, Yet, through the veil of flesh that, like a shroud, His Deity enwrapt, by faith they saw The hidden majesty and recognized Their Great Creator still. Nor did the fiends With glee exulting, but with deeper dread, Behold that lowly birth. For never yet Was human birth attended like to this By signs to them portentous of their doom. A mortal child, yet free from mortal taint Of sin, and of an unpolluted womb, A virgin's offspring, born into the world, What miracle was here, and miracle That all their power confounded! While what meant That starry wonder in the skies, which brought The Magians thither from the rising sun, With gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh, To pay obeisance, e'en as to a king, To That obscurest infant lying there? And what, as on expectant saints returned The spirit of long vanished prophecy,

Meant their dark sayings of this babe declared, Announcing a salvation, long prepared, At length in him revealed, and uttering forth His praise, as one ordained of God to bless The heathen world with heavenly light, and gild With nobler glory Israel's crown of fame? Whoe'er this child of marvel, and to what Order of Being, past their ken, allied By nature unconjectured, this they knew, Such signs and wonders augured nought to them But ill; and deeming that the destined hour, When of the woman's seed the serpent's head Should bruisëd be, was nigh at hand, they all Their hosts malign prepared for coming war.

Then, as impatient to begin the strife, And by one crafty blow struck unawares, Or ere his plan of battle were matured, Their foeman to destroy, did these incite The soul devoid of ruth of him who swayed Judæa's vassal sceptre, to that deed Of loathsome cruelty which set the crown On all his other infamies, and wrung The hearts of Bethlehem's mothers with the throes Of mingled woe and horror. So, at night, When in their hold besieged, some brigand band Will sally forth upon their slumbering foes, O'erpower and slay the sentinels, or ere Is time to sound the alarm, and with hushed steps Of tiger-stealth, from tent to tent, pass on Stabbing each unarmed warrior in his sleep, By murder smiting down whom in fair field Thus deemed the fiends, The cravens dared not meet. By foul attack untimely, to smite down Our Champion; but their vain device foreseen Of God, by miracle He snatched away His darling from the scene of slaughter, while The Powers of Darkness, baffled, knew His hand Had their chagrin and disappointment wrought, And henceforth till the destined hour were ripe, Forebore again to anticipate the fray.

Meanwhile, as the past ages, gathering slow, Did Earth for her Redeemer's work prepare, So he, for that great work, must be prepared

By destined discipline. Not all at once The stately cedar in its full grown strength Shoots forth on Lebanon; nor all at once. Broad and majestic, from its source outflows The mighty river; and not all at once Conscious of Godhead and with mind mature. And his high mission burnt into his brain Appeared the incarnate Saviour. Then had been No perfect manhood his, and Perfect Man Must he both live the life and die the death For man his chosen fellow. Hence unknown. Unrecognized of men, through all the grades Which mark developement of human mind And stature, in the Galilean town Held in such light esteem, that e'en its name Had passed into a proverb of contempt, He sinless grew. In childhood and in youth Wearing obedient the parental yoke, Graced with all acts of filial piety; Learning the artizan's rude trade, and with Hard hands of toil wielding the plane and saw, Nor scorning utmost menial tasks, that none Hereafter might disdain the lot of toil. By his divine example made divine. So History tells of monarchs in disguise. Hiding in rudest hovels from their foes, The more to mask their kingliness and ward Suspicion off, their royal hands have deigned To ply the peasant's lowliest tasks, and even To wait upon the hinds who sheltered them.

Yet with the first faint conscious reason came, On the young spirit dawning, like the dim Pale glimmer whitening o'er the eastern hills Long ere the sunrise crimsons all, the vague Prescience of things to come, and lent a tinge To childish speech and action, not unmarked Of her who bore him, while she treasured up And pondered in her heart the strange events Attendant on his birth. 'Twas not the will Of God, to us the record should come down Of that divinest childhood, for perchance We then might ne'er have with the foibles borne Of our own children. Yet one beauteous page,

Embalmed in the Revealed Word, remains Illustrious to all time, to lend a light Whereby Imagination's hand may trace Her picture of the Child Messiah's life; That page which tells of Him to boyhood grown, At the sweet time of life when youth puts forth Its tender bud of promise, how he went To Salem, at the paschal tide august, To worship with his parents at the feast, And how, all rites observed, the pilgrim band A day's march travelled on their homeward way, Sudden it flashed upon their frighted minds That the young lad was missing. Then their steps In haste retracing to the capital, They sought him far and wide, and found at length, Where in the temple met the long-robed scribes And doctors of the law, with wisdom far Beyond his years, plying those men of lore With interrogatories that revolved Around high themes and sacred mysteries. And waking wondering surmise in their breasts What boded thoughts like these in one so young? But depeer wonder her's whose mild reproach, " Son we have led for thee a sorrowing search, Drew answer high, that baffled all her ken, " How is it that ye sought me, wist ve not That I must be about my Father's works?" Then back He went into obscurity, To ripen for His mission unobserved, And bowed to all His parents' will until The day of Heaven appointed should reveal Him to himself, and all his task divulge.

1874.

It came, what time, the Eremite emerged From his long lonely vigil, in the wild For thirty years maintained, by frequent fast, Silent communion with the soul of things, Deep search of the abyss of his own heart, And mind-absorbing prayer, Divinely schooled For his great mission, and began to teach And preach Messiah's kingdom night at hand. Forthwith, the startling rumour flew afar, Through the Judæan villages and towns, And ere long reached the capital. Men heard,

Astonished that again a mighty seer
Had risen in Israel; and in crowds they poured
Their thousands forth to hear, as, day by day,
He scourged their sins with bold and scathing words,
Flashing upon their souls the lightning glance
Of Truth, and to the contribe ministering
The mystic rite in Jordan's flowing wave.

Hither, to share that rite, which symbols forth The power that laves the sin-stained souls of men. By strong mysterious inward impulse led, As one with them, the Sinners' Champion came. On Him the Ascetic's penetrating eye, Transfixed with wonder, gazed, as he beheld, In the calm features of the Human face The radiance of the Godhead breaking through In stainless awful beauty. "I have need To be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou To me?" he cried. In tones of mild command, That overbore demur, the Sinless One Gave answer, "Let it be so now, for thus 'Tis meet that we fulfil all righteousness;" Then stepped into the stream while, o'er his head, The Eremite the anointing waters showered.

Lo! in full vision of the awe-struck throng,
What sudden glory beams! A rift appears,
O'erhead, in heaven's clear azure, whence outstreams
A flood of dazzling light, and issuing forth,
Clad with the amber lustre which outshone
The glittering topaz came a wingëd shape,
In semblance of a dove, that hovered o'er
His sacred head a moment, then alit
With folded pinions, while a voice Divine
The all-prevading silence breaks, "Behold
My Son Beloved, in whom my soul delights,"
Then the heavens closed and all was as before.

But not all as before within His breast,
To whom such open witness Heaven had given;
Full-orbed, within His mind, as at noonday,
In heaven with overpowering lustre, burns
The sun on his meridian throne, outflamed
Upon the dazzled human consciousness
Its conjoint Deity. Trembling, o'erwhelmed

In spirit, stricken by the sudden blaze Of light revealed, He hurried from the crowd, Urged by tempestuous might of impulse wrought Of the unmeasured Spirit infused, which drave His footsteps forward, e'en as whirlwinds drive The lifted fragments o'er the sandy plain; Nor paused till, of the inhuman wilderness, His steps had gained the loneliest solitudes. There, hidden from the intrusive gaze of men, Withdrawn from contact with the jarring world For forty days he sojourned, with his soul And Heaven communing, pondering, o'er and o'er, His great Redeeming work for men and all His purposed kingdom's purposed ends, nor brake His long-continued fast, his spirit wrapt In deep abstraction, which abeyant held The body's all inferior wants and powers. This might not last; resistant nature spake With hungry cry, and even the mind outworn Ouivered to bear the strain. Thence weakness grew, Whereof the Powers of Ill advantage seized To force a contest. Like a hungry flood, Swollen by long rains, that bursts its pent-up bounds And rolls its waters o'er the cultured fields Of men intent on havoc, on his soul They rushed, with crowding flood of evil thoughts, To vanquish his obedience, and breed Dissension 'twixt His own and Father's will; To win Him, conscious of His boundless power, Lordship and all-compelling sovereignty, These to employ to gain self-centred ends Wherein Redeeming Love should have no part.

Famished and faint, his eyes were strangely drawn To rest upon the desert stones that lay Scattered profuse around. Was it the work Of fancy, that in form and shape they seemed Fashioned like loaves of bread? Suggestion prompt The haunting demon whispered to his thought, "Why hunger? Here is ample table spread, To feast thine appetite at will. Arise, Employ thy might, for art Thou not the Son Of God Most High? Command and change to bread These stones, and eat, and be Thou satisfied!" Oh hateful thought, repugnant to His soul!

That He, who came to suffer, should expend His sovereign power from suffering to escape, And on self-pleasing bent, should over-ride By miracle the laws to Nature given, To gratify a fleshly appetite. With utter loathing he repelled the assault Upon His filial trust and duty made, Recalling the great Lawgiver's grand words—"By bread alone Man lives not, but by Word From God proceeding."

That temptation o'er, His mind became absorbed in reverie. Musing, he dwelt on his appointed work In all its varying phases, and foresaw, Even while he mused, as pictured to his mind, The thorns of suffering most intense that would His painful path o'ergrow. The unbelief. Obdurate malice, cruel scorn, wild rage, And furious hate whereto he should excite. As meekly he pursued his blameless course And high redemptive mission, the warped hearts Of his misguided countrymen, were now Full in his view. The invisible fiend addressed The subtle whisper to his soul:—No need That Christ of men should be rejected thus, Thou hast the power their homage to compel And bow their wills in wonder to thine own! Then, in imagination, he beheld The stately towers and domes of Salem rise, And on one dizzy topmost pinnacle Himself with foot firm-planted, while below The gathered crowd looked up expectantly. 'O Son of God,'—'twas thus the Tempter flashed The thought of ill upon his mind,—" transport Thither thyself by thine inherent might, And from you pinnacle, in sudden leap, Cast thyself down; thy Father's angel-guard Shall bear thee up unharmed within their hands. And lo! thy countrymen, the full proof given Of Messianic errand, shall acclaim The glorious deed, and hail Thee as their King." Oh hateful thought, repugnant to his soul! Thus to anticipate the joy ordained To be of sorrow born, and pluck the crown

Of triumph from the yielding hands of Time, The perils of the battle all foregone.

Again he thrust aside the insidious thought, Steadying the human mind on the firm law Divine,—" Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

That second trial past, out of the throes
Of spiritual conflict steadfastly maintained,
Victorious in the issue, sprang deep peace
Which swathed and soothed his throbbing heart, and
hushed

The worn perturbed spirit to repose. As amid waves of ether, wingëd borne
In flight serene, his thought o'erleapt the bounds
Of time and place, and seemed to stand supreme,
Exulting, on some far stupendous height,
Surveying all the wide domains of Earth
And recognizing in them all His own;
For of that kingdom of immortal light
And love and loveliness, His realm to be,
He knew this whole world destined.

Thereupon,

The Evil One injected to His mind,— "But through what storms and agonies of change, What hideous wrestlings, bloody strifes of men: What fiery martyrdoms of noble lives, What frustrate gropings in the night for dawn, What centuries of fear and woe and pain Must she move on to her glad destiny. Shall not the Christ of his own deed forestall The waiting and the woe; as David's Son And Israel's King, claim of the lord of Rome His birthright, and the customed homage yield?" Oh hateful thought, repugnant to his soul! What devil-worship were such fealty, To the imperial monster, in his sty At Capri, wallowing deep in infamy! Again he triumphed through the high command, " Jehovah, He is King and Lord alone, Him shalt thou worship and Him only serve!"

So He endured the triple test and stood Obedient, thrice triumphant o'er the foe, Yea, nobler, all-triumphant over self, Sinless, a Son of Adam evil-proof; And lo! the trial ended, angels came And ministered their solace to his soul.

Thence, back again, to mingle with the world He went; His soul for her high task equipped With strength to suffer, wisdom to proclaim His kingdom's blessed advent and unfold The principles of love which formed its laws. In town and village, on the breezy mount, Or by the shores of the Tiberian lake, As round him flocked the eager masses, drawn By the magnetic force of sympathy, He spake the Truth which, on their weary days Of care and toil, beamed a new light from Heaven, The light of a glad Word warming their hearts With hope and blessedness before unknown, Dispelling by its keen intensity The gloom of long, night-shrouded centuries.

He told them of the Fatherhood of God; That He, who spread the Heavens and sways the world By law Divine, was no dread power far off And foreign to mankind, but bound to them By closest ties of rare affinity, Encircling all with one vast chain of Love. He bade them mark the lilies of the field, How glorious in their summer loveliness! He bade them watch the wild bird's winged flight, Or fledgling chirping in the downy nest, And deem that He, who for the meanest thing His hands have made provides, would leave no child Of man in all the world, forlorn and lone, To dwell an alien from his Maker's care. He told them how through all their hateful sins. For which tho', ne'er they might forgive themselves, The heart of the Unsinning God was still Towards them, yearning o'er their wandered souls With overflowing pardons, and His arms Spread wide to welcome whoso would return, To fold them contrite in His warm embrace, And soothe their griefs to slumber on His breast.

He told them of the Brotherhood of Man; How all were children of one family, Loved of the self-same Sire; and bade them love Each other, and by gentle deeds and words, And self-devotion to each others' weal, Make of their life on earth a hallowed thing. A counterpart of the sweet life of Heaven. He bade them cherish in their hearts all true And generous feelings, noble charities, Renouncing pride, ambition, hatred, scorn, Envy and greed and every evil thought, And trampling selfish instincts underfoot, And from the selfish maxims that so long The world had governed, turning God's domain Of beauty into one vast field of feud And wrong, emancipating now their souls, He bade them, as new-born to higher life And holier aims and kindlier destiny, Take for their pattern the High God Himself. Their characters the transcript of His Own.

He told them of the service God requires; That not by rites of worship long drawn out, Nor days deemed sacred rigidly observed With grim devotion, nor by painful fast And abstinence, nor costly offerings brought And on the altar laid, the Eternal One Is pleased with men; but by the tear that falls, The sigh that breathes, sprung from the contrite heart Which mourns for sin and loathing it forsakes: And by the footstep cheerfully advanced To meet the call of duty, and the prayer That in the breast all secretly awakes, Stirred by the conscious feeling of His Grace, And winged by warm desire to Him aspires. Although it find no uttered voice in words: And by the will, whose impulses accord With His in meekness, which to God-like acts Of magnanimity and mercy prompts. The hand that feeds the hungry, breast that throbs In sympathy with misery, want and pain, And eye that smiles or saddens in response To joys or sorrows other than its own, These He declared to be of nobler worth. Weighed in the balance of all-judging Heaven, Than all the outward pomp of ordinance By sacerdotal art contrived and wrung,

Reluctant from the grudging hoards of wealth, To buy the favor of that awful Power Men's guilty spirits own and owning dread.

He told them of the Blessed Life, unveiled Its secret, showed them how it might be won: That not where sensual pleasure lures, nor where Ambition flushed with thirst of glory leads, Nor where the grovelling slaves of wealth indulge Their dreams of greed and gain, doth happiness Await man's eager grasp. The blessed life. He taught, is theirs, whate'er their state or lot. Though unapplauded, undiscerned of men. Lowly, despised, obscure, or e'en the targe For Persecution's darts or cruel scorn Of evil and reviling tongues, who live To do the will of God and bless their kind. The pure in heart, the true, the merciful, The souls that thirst and hunger after good. The meek, the unoffending and the slow To take offence, these ever, these enjoy A peace within that wholly fills the breast, Raising its blest possessor far above The eddying whirl and tumult of events, To find an amulet for every ill In the assured approving smile of God.

He told them of the boundless bliss beyond, The unending glory of His Father's home On high, where treasures never gather rust, Where its pure pleasures never know decay, Where all is life and love and Blessedness. He bade them view the things of Earth and Time, Not by the dull light of this mundane sphere. But by the intenser rays upon them cast From that Eternal region. Wherefore reck The care, the ill, the poverty, the wrong, The persecution or the pain endured In this life's transient scene, if at its close Heaven's radiant mansions, on the enfranchised soul. Their welcoming unfolding doors should ope. And yield an ample recompense for all? And what the avail of all the world might give Of all its store of coveted reward,

Its honours, riches, joys, and empery Of power, if, at the end of all the soul Be naked and unfriended left to roam, Outcast and exiled, through Eternity And reap the bitter forfeiture of Heaven?

He told them of His own deep-hearted love, How He had come to seek and save the lost, Restore the erring, win them back to God, And guide their footsteps in the way of peace. He bade them see in Him the word fulfilled, By seers of old declared of One for whom The years were waiting, and on whom should rest The Spirit of the Lord anointing Him To preach glad tidings to the poor, to heal The broken-hearted and imprisoned souls Set free: to break the fetters forged of Sin That hold mankind in thrall; and with a voice Divine should break the silence hanging o'er The curtained ark of Time, and rend the veil, Whence issuing should God's chosen æon dawn Like a new morning, to rejoice the world. Hence, from the tangled mazes where, beguiled Of Sin's dark spells, wildered and worn they roamed Astray and vainly hungering after rest, He bade them bring their burdens and their woes, Their hearts by sorrow laden, passion worn, To Him; whatever aching memories, Unsatisfied desires, extinguished hopes, Remorse or fear were rankling in their minds, To come and at the living source of Truth, His words unlocked, to quench their spirit's thirst, Be healed and comforted and satisfied.

'Twas thus He taught them and His words, like life, Smote on the hidden cords which slumbering lay Within their breasts, and woke to vague unrest Thoughts and desires and feelings new and strange, As when a sudden stream of music floats O'erwhelming all the sense, and penetrates The soul's deep cells that vibrate to the strain. Nor was it that His words alone had power, But in the tone and accents of his voice Which overflowed with winning tenderness,

And in His loving look and gentle mien
There was a magic charm that to Himself
Attracted and subdued them. Many a son
Of labour felt his toil-worn heart revive;
Souls whom despair had seized shook off the weight
That paralysed their strength and caught from Him
Returning hope; the scornëd outcast came,
And weeping won back virtue at His feet;
The proud grew humble, the hard-hearted kind,
The grasping generous, the deceitful true,
Mourners forgot their griefs, while mothers brought
Their infant charge, and laid them in His arms,
And begged the Teacher's blessing on their babes.

But not with glad response alone, the Truth Too heavy hung He brought them met from men. The chains of bigotry and prejudice, Sin, superstition, selfish passion round Their captived souls, that, grovelling earthward, hugged The roots whence all their miseries grew, to lend Welcome to Him who sought to set them free. It was but here and there a human heart. And mostly these among the humble poor, And such as by the world in light esteem Were held, with sympathetic feeling glowed And warmed towards Him, pliant to the touch Of His Divine Revealings. 'Mong the hills And vales of Galilee his followers grew And gathered round him; freer scope was there For the new leaven to work. But when He sought The centred cities where the mighty waves Of life were heaving, and the capital Whereto a thousand ancient memories clung, Amid the crowded marts and thoroughfares He found Himself rejected. By the great The powerful and the rich, the men of rank And fame and fancied wisdom, ruler, priest And scribe, where not with hate received, His words Were deemed unworthy heed, or heeded made Matter for mockery; so some untaught clown Might sudden light upon a heap of gems, A moment watch them glittering in the sun, Then strew them with his feet and trample them Beneath his heel, unknowing of their worth.

And many were who hated and with hate
Which deadlier grew, the more they felt the calm
Yet piercing power that from His speech and glance
And presence issued forth. His holiness
Rebuked them; his pure teaching only stung
Their rage to fury, as it tore away
The self-deluding mask which hid their sins
From their own view, and set the awakened worm
Of evil conscience gnawing at their hearts.

Withal there was the flattering fatal dream
Which fed their Jewish pride galled by the yoke
Of conquering Rome. Their Messianic hope
Had grown debased, a hope that, from the Reign
So long foretold, her satisfaction sought
Alone in earthly gifts, and to no goal
Of good her eager vision strained beyond
Their own aggrandisement, Glory and Power
And conquest given to Jewish arms to reap.
Ah! how unlike the hope which erst had wrought
To rapture the tranced soul of ancient seer,
Prophet and patriarch thirsting after God,
A world-embracing hope that visioned forth
Joy, Peace and Love for Universal Man.

For now they deemed Messiah should appear, And soon, an Earthly Prince of David's line, Arrayed in splendour. One intent on deeds Of martial valour, territorial spoil: A mighty man of battle who should lift The standard of revolt against the power Of heathen Rome, and gathering round His flag The flower of Judah's youth, should lead their hosts In arms, and roll the tide of war along O'er many a red victorious field; should win Renown, and drive the strangers from the land And blast their might; should once again restore The withered strength of Jesse's fallen house; Should plant his throne in Salem as of old. And make the name of Judah to be feared Among the nations, and her sway extend From sea to sea, from distant shore to shore, Laying them under tribute. Here, instead. Was one who disappointed all their dream,

Who bade them wrench their hope away from all To which with patriot-ardour it had clung, And Him for their Messiah take who, born 'Mong the rude peasantry, of peasants made His friends and followers; who for kingdom sought Dominion only in the hearts of men; For conquest, victory only o'er their sins; And for the Liberty of Fatherland By force of arms achieved, their aim instead, Bade them aspire through Truth and Love to gain The Freedom of the Soul. If this were He, If this were He, indeed, ah! what a blow To all their swollen ambition. Loathed and scorned, They spurned the Giver and His offered gift, And from them flung the Pearl of Price away.

Natheless, had not a wilful blindness filmed Their mental vision, deadening all the sense Of superhuman grace and majesty, They might have known this hated Nazarene Was He, whose day their sires had longed to see, Whose glories all their prophet bards had sung. For not alone His wondrous words came clothed With a supernal wisdom, but His works, As day by day he moved among them, spake Him, one who wielded a resistless power. A word, a touch, a look, a thought, and lo! Owning His will supreme, contagion fled The victim of disease; the burning heat Of fever sank subdued; the ghastly hue Of plague was changed to glow of ruddy health; The scales of leprosy fell off and left The whilom leper clean; the palsied limb Grew firm; the sightless eyeballs of the blind Opened to greet the beaming smiles of day; The life-long cripple laid aside his crutch, Rose to his feet and leapt and ran with glee; The deaf, no more insensible to sound, Heard music in the voice that wrought his cure; And the poor mute, his loosened tongue made glad, Began to speak the Mighty Healer's praise.

Nor such alone His power. Dull matter, bound By iron laws, grew pliant to His will,

That changed the tasteless water into wine
To grace the spousal board, and with a touch
Creative multiplied the loaves that fed
The famished thousands on the houseless plain.
The warring elements of Nature heard
His calm rebuke, and the wild storm forsook
The bosom of the deep: even demons fled
Affrighted His commanding word, and left
Their maddened victims calm and rational;
While grim Decay and Death gave up their prey
To Him, as life He spake into the dead,
Or called her buried brother from the grave,
To kiss away the sorrowing Mary's tears.

O, Son of God! these were thy works of Power, Which set the sign of Heaven's broad seal to attest Thy mission all Divine. And ah! what grace, What overflowing tenderness they shewed, And winsome beauty; every miracle, A deed of melting Pity, yearning o'er The aching want or woe of whomsoe'er Its succour blest. O, could thy stubborn foes, Tho' to the frantic height of folly whirled In unbelieving frenzy, yet discern, In these divinest acts of loveliness, No glint of godhead breaking through the garb Of lowlihood that veiled Thee? Had those deeds Been acts of deadly wrath, how had they quailed, Before Thine awful glance, with abject dread And Thy just claim allowed! Their hardened hearts By terror broken, crushed, subdued, where now Love's tenderest touches found them adamant

So with His mighty heart, that ceaseless yearned To bless mankind, yet ever daily pierced, And smitten through and through with sharpest pangs By men's obdurate scorn, the Saviour trod Unfalteringly the thorns of life, nor blenched A moment from the goal. Before Him loomed The crimson shadow of the Cross, which grew In vision on His soul as nigher verged His path upon it, and still drew Him on, Goaded by strong desire and yielded will, Hemmed in from every impulse stirred by aught

Beside, until His work were wholly wrought, And the dread baptism of blood complete. The Cross, 'twas this whereon His mind was set, The Cross, 'twas ever present to His thought; It made His sufferings welcome, while it gave A keener edge to all, for thus He knew Their scourge was schooling, for the end, His soul. And this, ev'n in that one supremest hour, When to the chosen three on Tabor's height His glory stood revealed, and through the Man They saw the effulgent Godhead stream, and heard The voice that spake Him "Heaven's Beloved," and saw And heard the Prophet Twain, whom ancient Time From her sepulchral crypts for that one hour Gave back to Earth, with their transfigured Lord High converse holding, of that converse high 'Twas this was all the burden: round the Cross It ranged, that Cross which all His purpose held, That Cross which, while the offering tarried, held, Concentrate to itself, the Mind of Heaven.

1880.

BOOK V.

REDEMPTION ACHIEVED. (SECOND PART.)

The Argument:—The Redeemer's Passion—Scene in Gethsemane—The Fortitude of Christ vindicated and the cause and nature of His agony explained—His arrest by His enemies—A night of Woe—The Redeemer's Patience—The Bar of Pilate—The Crucifixion—Exultation of the Fiends—Love's Triumph—The Redeemer's Death, Signs and Wonders thereupon—The Soul of Christ victorious—Flight of the Demons—Pursuit—The overthrow and spoiling of Death—Entrance into the Region of Darkness—Opening of the Prison-Houses and deliverance of the Captives—Ascent with His released ones to the Aidenn of the Blest—His Triumph and Repose.

Thus, to the Holy of Holies of my song, The Sacred Theme hath led me. As I cross The vestibule and seek the inmost shrine, Oh. may the spirit of that high command, Which from the burning bush the Hebrew heard, "Put off thy shoes nor with the irreverent tread Of sandalled feet profane this hallowed ground," Sink deep into my soul; that I no note May strike, no thought may breathe, that unbefits The strain which tracks through deeps of utter woe, And deadliest death, and black and horrent shades Of quintessential Night, thence issuing forth Laden with spoils, the Champion of Mankind.

For now, His Prophet Mission all fulfilled, And God's High Truth as on the granite rock Of Time engraved in most enduring lines, His work on that stupendous crisis merged, Wherein His soul the core of agony Wrung out and made her own. But who shall paint That crisis? The amazement, the fierce pangs Of overstrained endurance, the dense cloud Of horror like a tempest gathering o'er The solitary spirit, or the throes Of labouring anguish, 'neath the imputed load Of ages of accumulated sin Upheaped by men, He expiating bore, The while He trod the Serpent-Anarch down,— Ah! who in insufficient human speech Shall limn? or even though but in thought devise Their image to the mind? Conception reels Dizzied with vain essay: the verse alone May hint of what befel, but still must leave His Passion's deepest mysteries all unsung.

It was the Paschal Tide. He knew his hour Had come and, with upgathered energies, Prepared His soul to meet it. The sad scene Of parting with His few fond friends was o'er; The traitor who had sold Him to His foes Unmasked; the last sweet words of promise, hope And counsel had been given, and that blest sign Which, for memorial pledge of changeless love, Still with His Church abides: and forth He went, To drain unshared, and to the dregs, that cup Of direst brewage, which had else o'erbrimmed Eternal wormwood for the souls of men.

Around Gethsemane the clustering palms And olives cast a deeper shade; beyond, The moonlight struggling with the clouds illumed. With pallid ray, a grassy knoll where sat A scanty group of followers, who conversed In tones subdued of what so late had fallen From their loved Master's lips. Against the night Mount Olivet uplifted its bald brow, Kedron hard by with tinkling murmur flowed. And still beyond, the many twinkling lights Of the great city glistened. On a ledge Of rock, within the garden-bounds, their limbs Outstretched and heavy slumber on their eyes, Lay the associate three. They saw not where, Within the garden's central space, their Lord Kneeling kept lonely vigil. Him no sleep Had folded round with soft and soothing wing, But his whole frame trembled with quivering spasms, Convulsively; and from his brow and limbs Oosed "bloody sweat," and down His sacred cheeks Rolled fast the unbidden tears, and choking sobs His bosom tore, and from His lips outbrake A cry of desolation,—" Father! God! If possible, O let this dreadful cup Pass from me! yet, Thy will not mine be done."

What was that cup? Surely they err, who deem 'Twas from foreseen approaching death he shrank, Or aught of pain in store; for then had paled The glory-light that haloes round His Cross To endless Age, dimmed by the tale which tells The fortitude of many a martyr since, Weak women, smooth-faced boys, who to His Name Bore hymnëd witness, wreathed about with fire. He shrink from death? Then let the Athenian sage Stand in the forefront with his hemlock draught, While infidels exult. 'Twas not the thought Of Death or Pain o'ercame Him: on to these With ardour had He pressed His life-long way; No! 'twas the loathed thing in contact brought With His pure soul recoiling from the touch, The Whole World's wretched guilt now made His Own. He had not borne the load before, 'twas laid Upon Him now. Around His guiltless heart Quick coiled the worm that tortures guilty men,

And fastened there its fangs, dragging Him down, Down, down in spirit through the abysmal gulfs Of all He most abhorred. The barbëd sting Sin leaves behind her, when the illusion flown The sinner wakes to feel the venom work, Now pierced Him sinless. Disappointment, shame, Remorse, He could not know, yet did He feel, No less, their mated torments harrow up His mind within him: the primeval curse Came down and smote Him to the uttermost.

What wonder if the overburdened heart Sank down, and irrepressible the cry Outbrake, and arrows winged among the Heavens Went piercing to the highest? Unsubdued Reigned still the self-surrendered Human Will, And in meek sufferance the example gave Of fortitude supreme. Nor was He left, In that great weakness, like a reed to bow And bend and break, before the gathered storm Of universal ill that burst upon Him, Unsuccoured from above. The cup He quailed To drink He might not scape, thereby alone Could triumph crown His task; but strength was given And comfort, as from Heaven an angel came Winged with the message of His Father's love. And ministered to His worn soul o'erwrought; And laden with the burden and the woe He rose up ready for the sacrifice.

For now He must be offered, and the hope
Of all the ages grown mature bear fruit.
Scarce had He risen and the disciples roused
From sleep, when on the hush and silence brake
The heavy tramp of nearing feet, and flashed
Upon the dark the light from lanthorns borne
Of armëd men, by his betrayer led
So basely to arrest Him. Calm and mild
He meets their ruffian band. Before His words
Of high reproof and mien majestic, back
They crouch dismayed; their guilty hearts o'erpowered,
As when the clouds, that shroud the eastern peaks,
Disperse at morn before the mounting sun.
They rally, and again give back, but He
Who led them, (O most infamous of men!

His name the brand of every traitor since! Could he not spare his Lord that keenest pang Of outraged love?) the signal gives, A KISS, Best pledge of friendship to worst use profaned, And deadlier than the assassin's vilest stab.

Then, as these seized and bore him bound away To glut the malice of His foes, His friends Sore wounded Him again, their constancy By craven fear o'ercome; they fled and left Him all alone, forsaken of mankind: One, afar off, still kept the band in view, And crept by stealth into the priestly court, To watch the event of the mock trial there, But only there to plant a deeper wound In the pained heart he loved by foul denial. And now began the insults and the shame, Outrage on outrage, worse than Death. Of priest and ruler; mocked with ribald jest; Smitten by menial hands and spat upon; A target for each vile indignity Their fiend-enkindled malice could suggest Or fury wreak; while every villain heart, That loved to add a pang to helpless woe. In Him exultingly its victim found. Oh 'twas a night without her peer in guilt! A night burnt in upon the page of Time In lurid hues; a night when Hell's wild rage Let loose to see the and surge in human breasts. Within its space, on one devoted head Crowded the woes might fill Eternity!

Morn brake at length, bringing the destined day; That day which, as one orb in yonder heavens By law of gravitation binds all worlds, And systems all, revolving round itself, So binds, as to one central point of Time, All Ages,—Future, Present, Past,—and all Eternity converging evermore.

Day of tremendous hate, stupendous love!

Day of dire Ill and Ill's most dire defeat!

By death destroying Death; by Sin's worst crime Working of Sin the utter overthrow.

It found Him worn with sleeplessness and pain,
And wrong endured and sorrow, and that weight,
Unknown of all, He bore: but, patient still;
In weakness most triumphant. But a word
Had passed His lips, and from High Heaven brought
down

Her legioned cohorts, all aflame, to bear Him back to her eternal citadel, In majesty to reign: He spake it not: One glance, His eye had darted and His foes, Like spring-leaves lightning-withered, had shrunk down Shrivelled and scorched in death: He looked it not: A Lamb ordained for slaughter, He repressed The insulted Godhead, held His Might self-hid, And unresisting suffered to the end.

Passive and meek before the Roman's bar He stands, the rabble clamouring for His death, In vain the judge to move their ruth essays; Assoils Him of all crime: then shows Him bruised By the rude soldiers' thongs, His brow all torn With plaited crown of thorns, His form arraved In royalty's mock garb; as well persuade The eager hawk with his fierce talons fixed In the dove's quivering breast, the spotted ounce, His fangs already reeking with the gore Of mangled fawn, to quit their hapless prey, As turn the hearts of those remorseless men, Or hush their wolfish sanguinary howl, Still "Crucify Him! Crucify!"—they yell,— " On us and on our children be His blood!" " Release not Cæsar's rival thou, or dread Imperial Casar's ire!"-O wretched judge! Coward and false at heart, by that one threat Launched on a sea of endless infamy! He wavers, yields, is lost; to clamorous guilt The innocent resigns, betrays the truth, And justice wrongs upon the judgment seat.

Now, faint, and bending 'neath the transverse beam Of His huge cross, the Sufferer wends His way To Calvary; that name henceforth a sign Of joy and watchword to His ransomed hosts. Forth, from the city gates, to see Him die, Pours with a voice of hubbub and fierce shouts

Of imprecation the excited crowd: O fools and blind, impatient to fill up The awful chalice of your nation's guilt To the red wrath's o'erflowing! Yet not all Among them hath malignant fury seized. For there are women weeping, and of those Who loved and trusted Him, a few who mix. Silent and sad, unnoted with the throng. And see they reach the spot!—Nailed to the Cross, Mated with felons, racked with cruel pain, Consumed with thirst, He hangs, and writhes and groans In mortal agony: then, as his foes Gloat o'er His tortures, and at every pang And spasm fresh insults heap upon His head. Till from His soul the piercing cry outbreaks "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani," Unseen the hosts of Evil gather round, Elate, and deem their triumph nigh at hand; While Nature from the scene averts her gaze, And spreads, o'er Earth and Heaven, a veil of night.

But vain, ye fiends, in vain your hellish glee, For not, in sign of victory to you, Shrills out that cry of anguish, spreads that pall. His Godhead hath not left Him; 'Tis the Man Alone, the human spirit overwhelmed By sorrow's surges, struggling with the storm, A moment shuddering lonely grows appalled; Appalled but not subdued: He triumphs still Who from those deeps of woe can radiate Love, In self-forgetful kindness, to dispense Blessing and balm for others' wants and woes; Provides for her that bore Him, speaks the word That thrills a contrite sinner's breast with hope. And in His lavish pity steps between His wicked murderers and their own great crime And pleads for mercy on their guilty souls.

There was Love's uttermost: she could no more; Her work is wrought,—the sacrifice complete. As when some river with impetuous force, Swelled by the waters of a hundred streams, Rolls seaward its advancing tide, perchance Some frail obstruction seeks to stem its course, The waters checked, sudden tumultuous grown

And raging for an outlet, all their strength
Collect in one spasmodic wave upheaved,
Burst the rude dam and bear the wreck away
With the contemptuous current; so borne down
By the accumulated wave of griefs,
The feeble barrier between life and death.
Gave way; His heart brake 'neath the double strain
Of love and woe; His eyes to Heaven upturned;
He cried "'Tis finished!" bowed His head and died.

Oh then what sudden trembling stirred the crowd, As signs and portents mark insulted Heaven's Observance of their crime. The astonished earth To all her deep foundations shuddering sighed, And quaked, and shook the very gates of Hell. Death heard that sigh and trembled on his throne. The solid rocks asunder rend, and hurl Their fragments high in air. In peal on peal The heavy thunders roll. The forked flames Dart in and out the skies; one angrier flash Strikes on the consecrated fane, and lo! The sacred veil within is riven in twain. And roof and pillars quiver. In the place Of tombs the caverns yawn, their marble doors Fall crashing to the ground, and from the sleep Of death uprising start the dead to life, And in old Salem's streets appear, and fill Her dwellers with dismay. Upon their breasts The people smote, and wailed their deed, and cried "We have slain the righteous" and in terror turned To seek their joyless homes. The Roman Chief, Charged with the crucifixion, on the corse In heathen wonder gazes, and exclaims,— "This man was sure some offspring of the gods, And lo! the gods prepare to avenge his blood!" While, as Tradition tells, in other lands Where'er man dwelt on Alp or Apennine, From Himmaleh to Andes, and beyond The utmost stretch of mountain range, and far Away to ocean's isles and ocean's bound. Whether in shade of high Caucasian ridge His home were made; or where, with lurid glare Terrific, northern Hecla frights the gaze Of Scandinavian peasant; or amid The Barcan wild; or else pavilioned near

Where Indian Ganges rolls his idol wave,
That hour no less surprising marvels wrought,
Strange sounds awoke in air, mysterious fires
Burned in the skies, great meteors fell from Heaven,
In many an idol fane the images
Men worshipped, by some unknown power were dashed
To earth, and everywhere that dread cclipse
Was seen and that tremendous earthquake felt:
While mariners who sailed the lonely deep
Told how they heard borne wafted o'er the waves
Weird voices that in anguish sobbed and sighed
And wailed lamenting that "Great Pan was dead."

But what of Him, whose pallid bleeding corse Hung stiffening there? With that expiring cry "' Tis finished!" burst from her imprisoning clay The enfranchised soul, as from its chrysalis On wings of glorious dye the upspringing moth, Radiant with splendour, clad with victor strength, Exulting in the grand atonement wrought. A sight of terror to the hovering fiends Who while the struggle between life and death Endured, around the cross, on poised wing, Waited expectant to behold Him foiled And frustrate of His aim. Dismayed they fled Their Conqueror, and from the awful light His presence cast, piercing them through and through, In vain they sought to hide, as He in spirit Pursued, and drave them, downward, to their own Dark den within those cavernous realms whereof Grim Death, as portal-warden, keeps the keys. Amazed the monster, as that hunted throng Of routed demons in confusion poured Through his black entry, started forth; his eve Quailed as it met the Champion's and his arm Uplifted stayed and paralysed his power, He knew his own defeat, his empire gone, And from his palsied grasp the sceptre fell. Prone he sank down, yielding his neck supine, Without a struggle, to the trampling tread Of the invader. He a moment trod Thereon, the while He plucked the anarch's sting, Then spurned him with His heel, and onward sped Puissant through the gates, still grander work

Of conquest to achieve and spoil the Powers And Principalities of Hell, and set The captives bound in age-long fetters free.

From dismal dungeon-hold to hold He passed. He called. The doors flew wide. He called again. That voice no demon-jailer might withstand. Nor hold his prisoners back. Wearing their chains, Of Guilt and Ignorance and Error forged. They multitudinous, to His high command Obedient, came, dazed by the beauteous light Which shone around Him, light that never erst, Nor since illumed the utter night of Hell. Then to those generations of Old Time, The Advent of His Kingdom He proclaimed. Preaching His Word of Love and all His Work Of Sacrifice, and told of Pardon won. Through blood and tears, upon the upper Earth, By His obedience unto death for man. Oh! then what joy among their myriads wrought! Souls that in every age on Earth had yearned For wisdom, holiness and purer life, And groped amid the gloom of weary years In quest of Truth, and cherished still the germs Of love and good within them, thrilled to hear His mighty voice and flung their fetters free And Him their Saviour hailed, and round Him thronged Inspired with newborn faith and hope and love. But yet not all; for wedded fast to Ill, There were malignant souls, who, while on earth, Had quenched within themselves each God-born spark Of love and goodness, and with hands perverse And suicidal sin's defiling thread Had so into their being's texture wrought, That, grown necessity, the voice which spake Of Heavenly Love was hateful to their ears; Back from the light, back to their several holds. To cells where deepest hung the dark they shrank. And round them wound their chains in closer coils.

Now, travelling in the greatness of His strength, And with His rescued captives in His train, The first-fruits of Redemption, from those realms Returned the Saviour, leaving Hell behind Nine tenths depopulate, and all her fiends

Gnashing in anguish of alternate fits
Of rage and deep dejection, shorn of power.
Out the grim gates He led them, where they saw,
Still nigh the threshold lying all abroad,
The Anarch writhing and his monstrous jaws
Agape, as to retrieve the ravished sting.
Beyond that dolorous region, in the wake
Of their Deliverer, like some warrior band
Returning from victorious fray, they passed
With loud-voiced pæans, mounting up the heights
Of the empyrean azure, till they reached
The golden shore and Aidenn of the Blest.

There hastening first to meet Him, falling down To clasp His feet with love and gladness, came His fellow sufferer, all whose felon crimes One loving pardon, in His dying throes Declared, had from high Heaven's recording page Cancelled for ever. After, angel-led, With welcoming hosannas, came a throng Of countless spirits of the good and just,— Renowned patriarchs of the ancient time, And mighty seers who had forehymned His day, And sages who had given God's Truth to men, And the great cloud of witnesses, whose tongues That testified for God, the unworthy world By cruel death had silenced;—from their seats Of tranquil bliss and holy calm, where long In faith they waited for His coming, now They crowded forth to meet Him, and extolled His might that made their own redemption sure. And now His travels and His toils He told, The sorrows He had borne, the conquest gained, And pointing to His ransomed prisoners showed How He had spoiled and worsted Death and Hell. Then He passed in 'mong those ambrosial bowers And glades, where asphodel and amaranth bloom Unfading, to one arbour far within And still, prepared by angels for His rest, Where, till the hour of His return to Earth, And watched by guardian spirits, He reposed: The while, with joy, his mingling hosts conversed Of Him and all the prowess of His Love. And there were recognitions and old ties

Renewed, as some their ancient comrades found;
And there were newer ties of friendship formed,
As soul to soul was drawn by sympathy;
And Paradise with jubilance o'erflowed.
1880.

BOOK VI.

REDEMPTION ACHIEVED. (THIRD PART.)

The Argument—Challenge to the Grave—The Grave
the Devourer of all things—The Spoiler spoiled—
The Burial of the Redeemer—The Descent of the
Angels to the tomb—Christ rises wearing His
Humanity—Joy of the Disciples—Joy to the World
at Large—The Resurrection of Christ, the Pledge of
His Power—Absurdity of those who deny the
Resurrection—The Fact proved by Martyred EyeWitnesses—Christ remains on Earth for Forty Days
—The last walk to Olivet—The Subject of His
Discourse—He is caught from them in a cloud while
blessing His followers—The Scene in Heaven—The
Redeemer Enthroned.

"O Grave! where is thy victory?" So flung
The Christian sage, his challenge forth, to men's
Most dreaded foe, what time his soul upclomb
The heights of rapture, by sure hope inspired
Of endless life and immortality.

"O Grave! where is thy victory?" My song
The exulting cry repeats; as in the wake
Of Her triumphant Hero she attends,
And Whom, erewhile, Victor o'er Sin and Death
And Hell she sang, once more the sounding chords
She sweeps, and sings Him Conqueror of the Grave.

The Grave, that, with insatiable lust Hungering for men, hath banquetted from age To age on human flesh, nor yet hath gorged Her fill, nor cries enough. Whom to appease, Even at her daily ordinary meal, Her busy minions, wearing every shape Of fell disease, each hour and moment, ply Their murderous task smiting their victims down,— Invisible and shapeless some, their stab, Like that of base assassin in the dark, Dealt sudden without warning from behind:— But whom when bent, as oft, on gluttonous feast, Her all-rapacious greed to gratify, Her mightier servitors, Plague, Famine, War On desolating pinions fly abroad And with the flail of wholesale slaughter scourge The weeping world. Unpitying, her, no prayer Hath melted e'er; no soft entreating voice Persuaded: no effectual bribe deterred From cruel ravage; whose ferocious jaws Revel in havoc, and whose palate best Is pleased when most the tears of mourning men Season her fierce repast. The only child, Some widow's pride; the maiden in the bloom Of opening womanhood, on whom the eye Of too fond lover doats; the bride new-wed, With orange-blossoms wreathed; the stalwart sire, His tender household's sole support; the friend On whose benevolence some orphan leans; The gifted genius in his opening flower Or unripe fruitage; and the statesman, skilled To pilot the unwieldly helm of state Amid the peril-haunted rocks and shoals, In crisis of his country's stormiest need: These are the harpy's cates and dainties; these The toothsome morsels that her dragon mouth. All terror-fanged, devours with keenest zest; While, in the place of music at the feast, Her vaulted caverns, round her evermore, Echo the wail and woe of hearts bereaved.

O Grave, that wert so terrible to man, Thy terrors for the Christian are destroyed, And tho' enriched with universal spoil And still shalt be, yet thou thyself art spoiled, And thine allies Corruption and the Worm Defied and set at nought! Pledge of a day Preparing, when again thou shalt be spoiled, And to the full! whatever prey of all That that thou hast fattened on, from the first child Of Adam slain, until the Archangel's cry Shall wake the judgment morn, forced to disgorge, By Him who burst thy bondage in His might, And reigns the Resurrection and the Life.

Whileas in realms of darkness, sore dismayed, The Powers of evil rued their dreadful rout: And while, amid the Aidenn bowers of calm. The disembodied spirit of the Lord Reposed from toil and conflict; on the Earth The marvellous signs His dving cry evoked Subsided, and all Nature wore again Her wonted aspect. On the cross still hung His lifeless form, until one pierced His side And showed Him dead; and then, ere ebb of day, They took Him down and with funereal spice Embalmed, and bore Him shrouded to His tomb Within the rich man's rock-hewn sepulchre. Then to the cavern's mouth a massy stone Was rolled and made secure; and sentries armed Set by His foes to guard the spot; while home, O'erwhelmed with grief, His friends returned and Night, O'er all the scene, her shadowy veil dropt down.

Morn rose;—the quiet Sabbath passed; and Night A second time spread her sable folds around The garden sepulchre; when ere the dawn Had blushed the orient sky and faintly brake The earliest streak of light, what sound appals The sentinels? and what these radiant forms, From whose o'erpowering brightness to the earth O'ercome with dread they cower? In dazzling white Enrobed, two angels, from the height of Heaven, On flaming wings descended, rend away The imprisoning stone and pass within the tomb, Sent of the Almighty Father to prepare And change, from mortal to immortal mould. The Saviour's body ready to receive His soul, by rest renewed, on rapid flight Earthward returning now from Paradise.

And see, He lives; the rigid limbs relax, And stir with quivering motion; the heart beats Fluttering with quick pulsation; through the veins Again the glowing currents circle warm; The pale lips lose their pallor, ope and breathe Returning air; the slumberous lids unclose, And the awakened eyes look forth, beyond The dreary vault, on Morning's gathering ray; A moment more, He stands erect, one glance Upon the heavenly visitants bestows, Then rising Lord of Life, He quits the tomb.

He quits the tomb, not as some phantom shape. Whereof the thought doth prick the trembling steps Of superstitious beldame, timorous child, Passing a lonely burial ground by night, And hurrying by, lest from among the graves A spectre should start forth: He quits the tomb Wearing His whole humanity, and soon A living man 'mong living men to show Himself alive by proofs infallible, The same as erst he sojourned in their midst, Conversing, teaching, sharing at their boards The proffered meal or journeying by the way. The same, and yet how changed! for now His frame, No longer to mortality allied, Transfigured in its nature, Him no more Can sorrow weariness or pain afflict, No more sharp lines of grief His features plough Nor on His brow the shade of sadness sits. The lustre of a joy full-orbed His eye Beams forth, a spirit wholly satisfied, And grace divine o'er all His countenance spreads.

O hearts sore bleeding, orphaned of your Lord! Eyes that, upon the forehead of the day
New risen, gaze dim with tears, for unsubdued
As yet, your sense of loss each wakeful hour
Loads with the memory of your blighted hopes
And Him in whom ye trusted; what exchange
Of anguish for delight, of bitter woe
For unexpected gladness will be yours,
As soon it shall be told in all your homes
He lives, the Master lives! And quickly flies,
From mouth to mouth, rumour of empty tomb,
Vision of angels seen who spake Him risen,
His own appearing unto some and word
Of kindly message given; some in doubt

As yet believe not; others, tho perplexed, Believe for they His promised words recal; The Evening Hour turns hope and doubt alike To blessëd certainty, as in their midst Behold Himself, The Risen Redeemer stands, And every soul among them bounds with joy.

But not to them alone the joy belongs, Born of that Resurrection; for henceforth, In every age, the tidings "He hath risen" Shall thrill mankind to hear, and like a spell, Than magic mightier working, rapturous stir The world's worn heart, and as the tender Spring Which, from thick shrouds of snow and icv folds Escaping, leaps to life and scatters forth Laughters and melodies and odorous sweets. So she shall burst the wintry gloom that chills Her veins, and from the imprisoning night of fear Leap into the warm light of fadeless day Broadening around, and opening on her view Vista of endless joyance. Here is found The antidote of woe; of every ill The priceless cure; of terror and despair The talisman to banish. 'Tis the pledge Of God's Eternal Clemency, of man's Immortal heritage and ceaseless life. Scattering upon his lornest path on Earth Beams of divinest ray; flinging an arch Of rainbow hue athwart the grimmest cloud That, big with storm, hangs threatening o'er His head; Making the wildest, loneliest desert glad And fragrant with delight; and kindling up A living, inextinguishable hope Within His breast, a hope so grand and fair, With Heaven's own reflex lustre it illumes His darkest hour below, and yields Him here, Already in anticipative trust, A foretaste of its full accomplished bliss.

For who can doubt, since Christ indeed hath risen, The availment of His work for its whole end, The power of His atonement to redeem, Or deem the purpose of Eternal Love In aught should ever fail? No fear that Sin Shall bind whom He unbinds, or guilt retain

Whom He delivers: from all spiritual death, His resurrection pledges His great might To raise to spiritual life the souls of men. And who can doubt, since Christ indeed hath risen, The effects, though distant yet, foretold to flow, In many a rapt and glowing prophecy, From His redemption wrought, or that the stream Of onward-flowing Time shall issue yet In universal blessing to the world? He, who hath burst the Grave's tyrannic bonds. Shall break all bonds besides, and overturn Each Power of malign influence to the weal Of Man antagonist: from moral death His resurrection pledges His great might To raise to moral life the sunken world. And who can doubt, since Christ indeed hath risen, The first-fruits from the dead, that men redeemed Shall rise like Him victorious over death, Heirs of immortal being? Though with tears We lay the form we loved low in decay, Its beauty withered and its strength dethroned In the dull clay to moulder: from the tomb, His resurrection pledges His great might To raise to mansions of Eternal Light That form revivified; in beauty, strength, Perennial youth, transfigured from the dust, And re-united with the vital soul. And clad with splendour nevermore to die.

And can there be, whom Incredulity So thralls and dulls to sense of solid proof, They relegate to fable's wild domain Or realm of myth and legend the bright page So fraught with joy to man? There are. O minds Befooled of prejudice! What annal then Might credence claim, what witness win belief? And what extinguishment were wrought of all That human trust sustains! A legend, myth? The Risen Christ, a myth! Then cease your search In the great storehouse of the Past ve scribes Of History, and lay down your learned pens, There are no facts to chronicle, despair Of aught but finding myth! Ye ministers, Who preach to men perplexed by care and worn With toil, sore battling daily against Ill,

The hope, that soothes and while it soothes sustains. Of struggle crowned with victory and toil With glorious recompense beyond the grave, Be silent with your message! Ye but doat And dream and monger with a myth! And ve. Who cross the threshold of the darkened home Where lies the coffined sire, and softly speak To widowed wife and orphaned child of glad Re-union in a happier life to come, And bid the eyes with tears of sorrow dim Look up to Heaven, and at that word the heart Stricken and nigh to break grows calm, forbear Your comforting endeavour and withhold Your kindly solace! 'tis a myth distils The elixir! so the infidel affirms,— O mighty-wise philosopher! he laughs Your "legend" of the Risen Christ to scorn.

So let him laugh, as many a fool hath laughed, Purblind within a boundless universe, Where all is teeming with miraculous power, Presumptuously they bound to human range The possibilities of God, and brook No miracle beyond in all His ways. But come, ye faithful witnesses! declare How ye beheld Him, heard Him and rejoiced! Thou Magdalen, upon whose ear first fell The charm of His familiar voice; and thou, Of whom not e'en thy late repented fall Hath cured the rashness, bold to invade the tomb And lo! 'twas void; and come, thou bosom friend. Whose trustful heart, ere seen, believed Him risen. And after seen recorded; come too, thou Incredulous ere proof was given to sense And fleshly touch; and ye five hundred, whom One self-same hour made glad your Lord to meet. And doubt was o'er! No, ye were not deceived: 'Twas no illusion fancy-wrought that won Your bold eye-witness uttered in your own And alien lands; as some in jails immured And darksome dungeons, some to scaffolds doomed And pyres of martyrdom, persistent still With dying lips ye testified, and set To fact the indisputable seal of blood!

But not with these must He remain: His throne And diadem await Him, all their hue Of glory pining pallid till He come; High Heaven, His earthly mission wrought, demands Her monarch back, and all the angelic hosts Hold in suspense the harps they long to sweep And wake the loud resounding chords and pour. Shaking the Eternal Citadel with song, Through all her courts the rolling floods of Praise. On all the ambient heights they throng and gaze Far down the Ethereal earthward; for on earth Now forty morns, as mortals count, have risen Since radiant from the tomb He passed, and still In Time's domain He tarries. Howsoe'er. To-day His sojourn ends, and on the wheels Of triumph, charioted in splendour, He Returns to reign supreme for evermore.

For the last time, He leads His little band Of chosen followers out among the scenes Of late resort, and onward to the slopes Of Olivet, that mountain which He loved: The mount of prayer and friendship, and of pangs As well, as thence, on that one day the voice Of fickle Jewry hailed Him as her King, He gazed upon her sunlit domes and towers And thought of all her stubborn guilt aud wept. No sorrow moved Him now, but in His eye Sat throned the light of a supernal joy, And every neighbouring spot whereon her glance Might rest was indisseverably linked With memories of exulting conquest; here The garden of triumphant agony, The Hill of expiation there, and nigh The burial-cave forsaken of her guest.

With steps that linger, for His loving heart, Intensely human, feels her tendrils cling, Still to the land she hallowed as her home, And more to the companion hearts endeared By long association, mutual joys, And sorrows, toils and travels, He moves on To the grand crowning close; while in full view Before the soul far-gazing lies out-spread The visioned future, and the unending bliss

Perfect and pure and universal won
By Him, her tribes to gladden, for the World,
When time to ripeness grown shall scatter down
Her mellow fruits, and to the reaping yield
Her golden harvest. Hence, as in discourse
He held them by the way, His presage lent
A tinge to those last words, whose meaning grasped
Though but in part, they never could forget.

He spake of boundless Power, of empire made
O'er Earth and Heaven His Own. He bade them go
And, to the utmost bounds of man's abode,
The Evangel of His love proclaim abroad,
And utter forth the Triune Name, till all
The world should hear their witness and receive
His Word and own Him Sovereign. Then He spake
Of Power their own to be; of wonders wrought
And dragon-might o'ercome; deep draughts of Death
Drunk without suffered hurt; of healing given
To men, and of His Own continuing Love
And Presence, what and wheresoe'er their lot,
Though unbeheld of fleshly eye, by Faith
Descried, abiding with them to the End.

Thus winding upward the ascending path, Upon His lips in wonderment they hung, When lo! the summit gained, He reaches forth His hands in benediction o'er their heads. That moment, while He blessed them, from the heights A cloud came down and wrapt Him from their view, Then rising bore Him hence. With wistful eyes They gazed far upward, where the cloud all fringed With intermingling hues of dazzling sheen Suspended in the azure hung, but Him They saw no more, although to ache they strained Their anxious vision. Then at their side appeared Two radiant messengers, who spake Him passed To heaven, and of a coming day foretold When, as in glory-cloud they had seen Him go, In glory-cloud from Heaven He should return. So marvelling greatly, yet not unrejoiced, They back to Salem wound their homeward way.

Meanwhile, from Heaven's remotest outposts, woke The cry, caught up with simultaneous voice

On every height, and inland borne and flung With gladsome shout through all the courts of God That gladsome gave the answer back, "He comes! The King of glory comes! Lift up your heads Ye everlasting gates! Ye golden doors Unfold, and give Him entrance!" At that cry. Bearing His radiant chariot in their midst Wherein to throne Him Victor, forth from Heaven In rapid flight the wingëd squadrons pour, Countless in multitude, fluttering the worlds With their swift pinions, as they hastened through The hyaline and interstellar depths Of the expanse to meet Him in the air. Around Him, there, they thronged with joyous burst Of welcome, as when some great city hails The mighty Patriot, who in arms hath fought To save her menaced freedom and prevailed, Returning from the War; so these acclaimed, But with still grander voice, the Ascending Lord. Then back they bare Him with them, swelling song That thunderous pealed triumphant, echoing far Among the starry nebulæ, as on From Heaven to Heaven they sped, until they reached The Throne that blazed ineffable, beside The Father's Throne invisible, whereon They seated Him, and brought His many crowns, And planted on His head for diadem. And placed the Eternal Sceptre in His hand, And round His shoulders hung the golden chain Of Universal Government, and cast Themselves, adoring, prostrate at His feet, As orbing round Him they beheld again The Glory of the Father's Love, and Him The Image of the Father saw, and heard The Father's voice pronounce the high decree,— "Thy throne, O God, shall evermore endure! Reign Thou at my right hand until Thy foes Be made a footstool for Thy conquering feet! Ye angels and archangels, worship Him!"

Thus, in His Manhood throned on high, the Son Of God began His Mediatorial Reign

THE PLEASURES OF THE SANCTUARY.

I.

From troubled rest and dark unfriendly dreams
I rise, and fling my casement open wide,
And drink the early breeze, and watch the beams
Of sunlight dancing on the river tide;
And hark the choir of all sweet sounds that glide
Through Morning's wide domain; from woody maze,
And copse and leafy bower, where the birds hide,
And warble out their unambitious lays,
And tune their little throats to chant their Maker's praise.

II.

The hours fleet on; and, as I watch and wait,
And muse on many things, the mellow charm
Of the warm day dispels the thoughts, that late
Disturbed my brain; a sense of soothing calm
Steals gently o'er my soul, like breath of balm,
Blown vagrant from the bowers of Paradise;
And, like the strains of some high-anthemed psalm,
All feelings, fancies, thoughts and memories
Make music in my heart, and softly harmonise.

III.

But hark! what sound makes glad the morning air?

It is the chiming of the Sabbath bells,

And calls the hamlet to the house of prayer.

How sweetly on the wind their music swells,

Pealing glad tidings of great joy; it tells

To the poor sorrowing heart of that abode

Where every pang is healed, where Mercy dwells,

A heavenly priestess, showering all abroad,

High almoner, the gifts and charities of God.

IV.

Awhile in prayer to Him whose Sacred Word
Hath blest this day of days, I bow the knee;
Assured that, tho' by angel-songs adored,
He yet will deign a favoring glance on me;
A prayer that He, in His own sanctuary,
Will with my spirit meet, and there impart
The glory of His light and majesty,
The beauty of His holiness, and dart
His Wisdom's radiant beams on my night-shrouded heart.

V.

And now I cross the smooth and dewy lawn,
By little plots of musk and thyme and rose,
And through the gate, up pleasant pathways drawn,
I glide 'neath hawthorn hedge and bramble close,
And on to where our quiet village throws
Its smiling shadow on the scene, and greet
The peasants, trooping forth between the rows
Of cottage homes that line the straggling street,
On to the house of God passing with reverent feet.

VI.

The churchyard gained, I move among the graves,
Homes of the dead sleeping in sunshine rest,
And would almost my time were come, the waves
Of sorrow hushed for ever in my breast,
The soul where sin may nevermore molest
Her peace in heaven with God. But hark! the bell
Hath ceased, and from the church, within its nest
Of ivy leaves, peals the rich organ's swell;
Entering I bid the world and care awhile farewell.

VII.

For here no worldly dreams may dare intrude,
And here must worldly cares be laid aside,
And 'neath this portal, with her cruel brood
Of griefs, may worldly sorrow never glide;
But here Religion, like a virgin bride
Takes lovingly the wanderer by the hand,
Soothes the vexed spirit, worn and trouble tried,
And overcomes his heart with whispers bland
Of an unclouded life in God's immortal land.

VIII.

Oh! matchless privilege to wait on God
Where He has promised with His saints to meet,
And all together at His footstool bowed,
With Him commune from off the mercy-seat;
In Praise adore, in Prayer His gifts entreat;
For these are silken threads which closer bind,
Our hearts in love to Him, and channels sweet,
Wherein a thousand crystal streams combined
Do flow from Him, their source, with blessing to mankind.

IX.

Thus with a spirit thirsting after God, Deemed the illustrious shepherd-king of yore, As wandering exiled o'er the waste he trod, Or mused on Jordan's solitary shore, Or climbed, his brow by sorrow clouded o'er, With wearied footsteps Mizar's steep ascent, While every passing breeze the burden bore Of bitterest sighs, his anguished heart that rent, As in his Maker's ear he poured his sad lament.

X.

And whence the grief his kingly heart that moved? 'Twas not the loss of purple or of crown, Nor foul rebellion of the son he loved, His petted Absalom, nor any frown By fickle fortune cast that weighed him down: A deeper wound, a sharper pang were his, He mourned the happy hours he once had known, When, 'mid the temple's sweet solemnities, God's glory shone and swathed his trancëd heart in bliss.

XI.

Thus mounting on the wings of strong desire, His thoughts reverted to the Holy Place, And with a prayerful hand he swept the lyre (That lyre which erst had filled the temple-space With prophet-hymns), imploring of His grace That God his yearning soul would yet restore To Zion's sacred precincts, where His face Had beamed benignant on his heart of yore, And taught him wondrous truths from Wisdom's sacred lore.

XII.

Nor his alone to find his best delight Where God is worshipped and His name adored, Where'er true worshippers are met, the light Of Heaven shines on their souls; and there the Lord Fulfils the faithful promise of His Word To meet and bless them; an exhaustless stream, Upon their hearts His mercies are outpoured, Kindling within their breasts a joy supreme, Rapture more pure and sweet than earth's most blissful dream.

XIII.

To call Him Father and to feel Him near;
To talk with God without a veil between;
Falling upon the spiritual sense to hear
The accents of His love; and, though unseen
By fleshly eye, to gaze on the serene
Shekinah of His grace, with faith that far
Outsoars the narrow days that bound our scene
Of vision here, and rises, like a star,
To those unclouded realms where Heaven's high
minstrels are.

XIV.

Such are the joys, like foretastes here of Heaven, Vielding oblivion of the world's sharp pain And rude disquietude, to them are given Who in His sanctuary join the train, Of humble suppliants: in minster fane Where down long aisles the rolling music peals, Or cottage meeting-house, oh! not in vain His people kneel, but there the Christian feels That the High God to him His countenance reveals.

XV.

Alas! for such as, blinded by their pride,
Or wedded to the vulgar joys of sense,
Or drawn along with the unthinking tide
Of worldly minds, on many a vain pretence
Direct their wanton wandering footsteps hence,
Mocking the sanctities of God's own day;
His precepts slight, nor deem it an offence;
Amorous of sin, who lures but to betray.
A poor requital her's, for mercies cast away!

XVI.

Would here the irreverent sceptic, void of ruth,
Disturb the simple faith of lowly mind,
By strange perversion of the sacred truth,
That God's vast presence cannot be confined
To temples made with hands, that we may find
And worship Him in every place, in grove,
And field, and forest maze, and where the wind

Among the mountain crags delights to rove, And trace His hand-prints all around, beneath, above!

XVII.

I know that God is everywhere; I know
That I may meet with Him in every place;
Where the brooks rill, the moonlit waters flow,
The creeping flowers the moist green banks embrace;
Where in old woods the branches interlace
And form a covert from the noonday heat;
Where fierce tornadoes sweep the desert space,
And storms career along on whirlwinds fleet;
And where on jagged rocks the wild sea-breakers beat.

XVIII.

Not one of all the stars the heavens that gem,
Nor dewdrop glistening on the thorny brake,
Nor lily hanging on its threadlike stem,
Nor ripple ruffling the clear argent lake,
But serves, within the adoring heart, to wake
Of Deity, devout and wondering thought;
His presence doth one glorious temple make
Of the grand whole His marvellous hand hath wrought,
Nor can I feel Him there, and gaze, yet worship not!

XIX.

But deem not they this glad communion feel
With God in Nature, who His house despise,
Who never in His earthly temples kneel,
Nor learn the wisdom there His Word supplies
To interpret all that darkly-written lies
Symbolled amid His works from zone to zone,
To read their meaning with enlightened eyes,
And yield true homage, can be his alone,
To whom first in His house God hath His mind made
known.

XX.

For there we learn what else we could not learn,
His deep compassions and His tender grace;
And there, what we could never else discern,
His royal clemency to man's lost race;
Go, search creation through, and leave no place
Untraversed, on fleet pinions of the dove,
Nay, track the boundaries of remotest space,
His grandeur we behold, His power we prove,
But in His house His Word proclaims that God is Love.

XXI.

Here too, we taste the honeyed joy that flows
From fellowship with other minds devout,
As with one rapture every bosom glows,
And eye to eye conveys the mutual thought;
From one deep source the tides of life well out
To warm each heart with love, all shapes far driven
Hence, and forgotten of grim fear and doubt;
To hold sweet interchange of soul 'tis given
To us, with saints on earth, angels and saints in heaven.

XXII.

Deep is the bliss that comes upon the heart,
Waiting on God in secret; a glad child,
The soul with strong emotions stirred, that start
In trembling tears from their warm springs beguiled,
To Him pours forth her prayer in accents mild;
And while she prays the boon receives, assured
By the winged Paraclete that He hath smiled;
Her confidence approved, her peace secured,
She rises, armed to bear whate'er must be endured.

XXIII.

But were we doomed to solitude in joy,

No human hearts with ours the sweets to share
Religion yields, methinks even these would cloy,
Even bliss a burden be too hard to bear;
For we were formed for sympathy; the prayer,
The rapture, and the praise in which we join
With other souls in concert, make more dear
The worship of our God, and richer twine
Among the thorns of life, like flowers, His gifts divine.

XXIV.

Nor these the sole advantages we gain
From rapt communion in the holy place;
But there high lessons, messaged not in vain,
Come fraught with guidance to our erring race;
'Tis there the matchless volume of God's grace
Unfolded, makes our path of duty clear;
What things to shun, what safely to embrace,
Apprises, and imbues our souls with fear
Of Sin, whose menial, Woe, aye follows in her rear.

XXV.

Here too, what light is thrown upon the ways
Of God's mysterious Providence to man!
How many a cloud that darkens round our days,
And strange enigma blended with the plan
Of the Divine proceedings, here we scan,
Illumined by the Word, their meaning shown;
And, like ambrosial airs, that gently fan
The traveller's heated brow, its truths make known,
God's love displayed in all His dealings with His own.

XXVI.

Out in the world we mark on every hand
Things hard to fathom, stubborn facts that fright
Our faith, and difficult to understand;
Readings occult and veiled in hues of night;
Grim force and fraud triumphant, and the right
Oppressed and trodden in the dust; wealth, power
In evil hands; while oft in mournful plight
Tried, tempted, spirit-tost, from hour to hour,
Grief still to grief succeeds and forms the Christian's
dower.

XXVII.

Full often have I hither come cast down
In mind and wondering much, when, like a ray
Of summer, on my troubled soul hath shone
My Lord's sweet promise, and hath swept away
The mists of doubt, and changed my night to day;
"All things together work for good to them
That love the Lord," and though awhile their way
Be shadowed o'er, and men their hopes contemn,
Yet theirs in Heaven shall be a kingly diadem.

XXVIII.

Thus when of old, disquieted within,

At the unequal fortunes of mankind,

The wicked prosperous in the ways of sin,

The good the sport of every adverse wind—

A mystery this too deep to be divined—

O'er Asaph's spirit wild misgivings stole,

Till in God's house, how Wisdom hath designed

Aright the general ordering of the whole,

Flashed on his mind and hushed the tumult of his soul.

XXIX.

But most of all the House of Prayer I love,
That there I meet my Saviour, and behold
The Son of God leaving His throne above,
And dwelling here with men in mortal mould;
For lo! before my adoring thought unrolled,
I learn the story of the Cross, and scan,
Inscribed in words lovelier than lines of gold,
Redemption's matchless but mysterious plan,
How Jesus suffered, died, atoned for ruined man!

XXX.

Amazing mercy! Love unspeakable!

This be the object of my constant gaze;
On this for ever let my spirit dwell;

Adore, my heart, God's wonder-working ways!

Approach the Cross; behold the sorrowing face,
The wounded form of Christ; for thence to thee,
Flow all the blessings that make glad thy days,
And more than all besides, oh! let Him be
Thy dearest love, who bought thy peace and liberty.

XXXI.

For dost thou live at peace with God, thy breast
Calmed by the sense of pardon? In His smile,
Sweeter than life does thy rapt spirit rest,
Vanished the dread that frighted her erewhile?
Like a charmed bark havened in faëry isle,
In summer-warmth of privilege is't thine
To dwell, and hear soft voices that beguile
Thy heart of woe, across Time's surging brine,
Singing of Heaven's high home where starry splendours
shine?

XXXII,

To Christ thou ow'st it all: and this it is

That makes the House of God to me so sweet;
Its noblest rapture and its highest bliss

That there my dearest Lord hath fixed His seat.
Oh, how delightful, hither to retreat,
And for awhile this hollow world forget,
And all the hollow hearts with whom we meet,
And find one heart on which our trust to set,
Round which to safely twine our best affections yet!

XXXIII.

Here while my days on earth are lengthened out, Still to Thy House, O God, will I repair, And join the reverent throng of Thy devout Adorers, finding my true pleasure there; Long as these limbs shall bear me up, oh ne'er Will I forsake Thy dwelling! Till the call To those blest regions where they need not prayer Shall come, and Death my spirit disenthral, Eternally to share Heaven's Sabbath Festival.

1861.

THE NIGHT SEASON.

Tis the Night-season. All the air is mute; O'er hill, and plain, and field, and vocal grove The latest sounds of life have died away. The birds have ceased their carol, which all day And far into the twilight was prolonged. The kine no longer low to all the meads But lie about the fields, like huddled mounds Of snow amid the darkness, couched at rest. The silver tinkle of the sheep-bell breaks No more, like music, o'er the wide-spread heath. Upon the wild is hushed the plover's cry. The sounds of rustic revelry, that long From yonder vale have echoed on the night, Are silent now; the peasant's song is o'er; And one by one the glimmering village lights Are all gone out. Silence and Solitude Awhile maintain their undisputed reign.

And now the hand of Darkness, drawing back The curtain of the daylight from the skies, Revealeth all the hidden wealth of Heaven; Unnumbered orbs and worlds in myriads rolled On worlds, profuseness of Creative skill! Here belted great Orion grasps his sword, Like one who goeth forth equipped for war, And flings defiance to the Western skies; And here, the sister Pleiades, glimmering sad,

As though in grief for one for ever lost
To all their number, shine, how like a group
Of angels, weeping o'er an angel's fall;
And here, the Boreal Crown in splendour gleams,
A diadem upon the brow of Night;
And countless more in glory stand displayed,
Princes and kings of light that round the Moon,
Pale Queen of Heaven, their silent homage pay,
Like youths attendant in a maiden's train.

Now borne aloft on Contemplation's wing, While every jarring chord within my breast Lies hushed, by this deep solemn conscious sense Of all-prevailing solitude, my soul Mounts, free from all distraction, unto Thee. My Life, my Joy, my Everlasting Hope; Source of my Being and of all besides That is, or was, or shall be, Great First-Last, Cause of all causes, Life of all effects Of Life, whose sway the tide of life controls In all its varied channels, and sustains The endless round of Being to its bounds: Sovereign Creator, King of kings, and Lord Of Lords, Great God, Creation's God and mine! To Thee I rise in meditative flight, And feel Thee here, a present Deity; Thy Spirit's sustentative aid I crave While on emprize of bold achievement bent, The highest reach of Song my Muse essays, Thyself the inspiration and the theme; O teach my feeble tongue to utter praise!

Praise,—This vast conclave of assembled worlds Take up the word and roll it on the night,
To all the starry nations far beyond
This world's horizon: still in higher tones
Than mortal speech can compass sounding praise,
Praise, the unceasing subject of their song.
To Thee, while they their endless circles round,
They utter praise, the matchless Architect,
Who formed them all on this majestic scale,
And life and motion gave them, calling forth
From nothing all things, order out of Chaos,
Light from the darkness, system from the void,
And all the splendid superstructure reared

Upon a plan whose utter magnitude
Baffles the utmost stretch of human thought
To comprehend an atom of the Whole;
So grand a Whole, so grand in all its parts,
Life within life, and wheel within the wheel
To endless continuity; within,
Without, cause linked in ever boundless cause,
The sole solution of the problem, God,
Omniscient, active, potent, present God!
Thine are their glories, Thee they all proclaim,
And in their order, majesty, and grace
Convey to all the cycles of all Time,
An image of the Workman in his work.

O Father, all thy works Nor these alone. Are loud in praise of Thee! Whether the Morn Begirt with crimson clouds, leads up the car Of Phœbus, opening wide the gates of Day; Or in mid-noon flashing meridian beams The burning orb triumphant rides the air; Or Night attends him to his royal rest, And robes the plain in silence and deep shade Or Light, or Darkness, still Thou stand'st revealed. The rolling seasons, day and night, the hours, The gliding years Thy Providence proclaim; Thine are the ages, and the voice of Time With ceaseless modulations sings to Thee. Nature is loud with tidings of her God; Yea the round world with all that it contains To Thee shews homage. On the mountain tops The white snows glitter in the face of Heaven, And meet Thy glances dumb with ecstasy. Below, the bleating vallies bask beneath Thy sheltering smile and Thy eternal beam, And tell their calm contentedness to Thee. The woods and groves are vocal of Thy love; And the primeval forests unto Thee Gigantic arms extend, as though to claim A benediction at their Maker's hands. The swelling brooks, the rivers winding clear Through fields that blossom in Thy golden ray, The roaring cataracts, o'er shelving rocks That leap and foam, all join the general song; Deep calleth unto deep; and, far away, Old Ocean rolls his organ notes of joy.

Mid this harmonious concert, by these notes Of universal praise encompassed round, This pealing anthem rising up to Heaven, And by the orbs of Heaven re-echoed still; Where even silence seems to join the song, And things inanimate yet find a tongue To praise the living God; shall man alone Refuse his tribute, man alone be found Dumb, and on Earth the one unhallowed thing? No! while this heart one pulse of life shall throb, While this frail tongue a single word can frame My deep emotion to express, to Him, Who first from dust this creature frame evoked. Endowed this flesh with life, and placed me here A complex and complete anatomy, Within a world, where all surrounding things Stand perfect, and adapted to my wants, And minister to my enjoyment; songs Of gratitude my spirit shall employ, My heart a lyre attuned to sound His praise Shall be, and all my service shall be His.

And can there be mid these amazing proofs Of Thee, Great God, the wretch so blind of sight, Perverse of heart, unable to descry The Maker mirrored in his mighty works? The fool attributing to feeble Chance This glorious mechanism, so replete With evidence of purpose and design? Purpose how wise! Design how beautiful! And past the measure of man's finding out! For how can mortal plummet fathom God? But shall he thence decide, against the sense That warns him of his folly, that no Mind Of higher reach than his to compass out The Eternal plan exists, refuse the light, Abjure his reason, and deny his God? Woe to the purblind crew, who thus shall dare To trifle with Eternity! For me, All things conspire to manifest my God; My Being here the surest proof of His; My Maker's praise shall be my constant theme And all the wonders of His mighty Word.

His mighty word! Awake, my soul, awake! In higher strains aspire, and emulate The angelic throng, that, round the Eternal throne, On Zion hill perpetual music make, And in full chorus tell to all the thrones. And principalities of Heaven, and all The outlying worlds, the matchless triumph wrought The glorious triumph of Redeeming Love: Awake my soul! the brighest attribute Of Deity demands thy grateful muse. Hereunto on Creative skill, and power, And providence and glory hast thou dwelt In high descant, and all the starry worlds Have lent responsive echoes to thy lay, Thy song shall find its culminating point Of praise in Love, mysterious Love, that brings God from the skies, as Man to die for Man. And lifts Man to the stature of a God. For He, the Word, the Everlasting Son Of God begotten, and by Him declared Co-ordinate, co-essential Deity; Who with Him and that mystic Beam of Light, From Him eternally proceeding, reigns In power, majesty, and love for ever, Supreme and Sovereign of the Universe, Surrendered once his state, and from his throne Descended, where before Him, day and night, The countless armies of the skies attend, And take their harps in hand, and sound aloud Hosannas to His name, and lowly lay Their trophies at his feet; His Father's courts Forsook, and left that bright abode of bliss And being found in fashion as a Man, For Man became a willing sacrifice.

And whence this condescension? Whence arose This need of sacrifice? Occasioned erst In Paradise, where Man, by God endowed With every boon and blessing qualified To render life one everlasting day Of pleasure and enjoyment, discontent, Unhappy heed to Hell's enticement gave, Refused obedience to the just command Of his Creator, plucked forbidden fruit

Of knowledge, sinned, celestial favour lost, From height of grace plunged headlong into guilt, And fell as once from Heaven the angels fell. Hell the dire forfeit, but that conflict rose 'Twixt Love and justice,—God the arbiter. The Eternal Word our substitute became: Incarnate Man he suffered in our stead. A spotless sacrifice, that we by Faith Might look to Him and live; and bore away The palm of triumph from the Anarch's hold. And came victorious through the gates of Hell. Hail, Holy Faith! that on seraphic wing, Dear offspring of the skies, to Earth descends, Empowered with sweet assurance to my soul Of his high pardon and enduring peace;— Transporting visitant; through thee I rise, Conscious of renovated worth, restored To all the native dignity of Man; Emancipate, enfranchised, far beyond The bounds of Time and space and mortal range Of sight, and hold communion with my God, Pour out my song to Him, proclaiming all, The wonders wrought by His redeeming love!

But not alone should Praise my tongue employ, For I have need of Prayer. Here at Thy feet, Father! behold thy suppliant servant kneel, And from thy throne in Heaven regard my prayer! Lo! in the Orient far, the first faint light Breaks through the darkness, and awakening Morn Reveals her rosy face. The increasing Dawn Floods all the heavens with glory, and the hills Rejoice with glittering crowns upon their heads; The twilight fades, retiring through the vales; The woods resume their anthem, and the streams And babbling brooks re-glisten 'mong the meads; The animated air is filled with sound, And all the strife and stir of Day begin. God of the Morning, rise! and like you orb That now re-animates the world refreshed, Upon my heart ray thy refulgent beams, My mind illumine with immortal Truth, Celestial Faith impart, and me endow With grace in inexhaustible supply!

Oh bid thy Dove of sweetest solace come, Inhabit here and make me all Thy Own, That I mid all vicissitudes of life. Each shade of mortal mutability May cling to Thee unchanged! Whate'er my lot. Though cast in Barcan wild or Libvan waste, Hyrcanian forest, pathless solitude, Where never step intrudes or human eye Bestows a glance of fond companionship, I shall not die unnoticed, and unknown, And unrejoiced, so Thou, my God, regard me! At peace with God-then Satan try thy worst! Bid sorrow like a surging sea arise And circle all my gay horizon round,— Bid sickness lay her hand upon my brow And wither up the morning of my days,— Bid sad mischance, with dreadful wind adverse Sweep off at once my fortune and my friends,— Bid Envy rob me of my untarnished name, And Persecution stretch me on the rack. He will uphold me; I by Faith will gaze Still steadfast on the Cross of Calvary. In my own cross rejoicing; and at last, My soul shall summer in Eternal Day!

Then when the last Archangel's trump shall sound With loud appalling note, and shake the spheres, While all Creation staggers at his nod, And the great deep reverberates his voice, The shaft of Doom shall cleave the vault of Heaven. Like forked lightening sudden driven, and all The splendid architecture of the skies. Blue dome, revolving orbs, planet and sun Fall crumbling into ruin, and no trace Behind them leave of their magnificence; The Eternal Word shall call as erst He called Upon Creation's morn, and Nature's plan, Like some fair dream that flies with Night away. Dissolve again into the shoreless void; The King himself shall come in majesty, With countless armies shining in his train,— Archangel, angel, cherub, seraph, saint, Legions invincible and armed as when They vanguished the artillery of Hell,—

Shall come and call the nations to His bar: The Dead shall wake obedient at His voice. Victorious o'er the grave; and the deep sea, Enriched with wrecks of mighty argosies, And slaughters of innumerable wars. Shall yield her prey; and fierce Gehenna ope Her flaming jaws and vomit out the damned: Princes, and potentates and kings shall rise. And all the great of Earth, and all the mean, Shall rise and own Him Sovereign, and account To Him result of delegated life, And at his hand receive their right award ;-Then I shall, O my Saviour! by thy grace, Stand marshalled with the Saints at thy right hand, A glorious company, with harps of gold Rolling harmonious numbers, that shall rise And swell and soar for ever without end: With them, in bliss, shall stand before the throne, And bear the palm of everlasting green, Crowned with the plenitude of Perfect Love, Triumphant crowned when Time shall be no more! 1855.

ON PRAYER.

Ī.

- O TRAVELLER, on life's rugged road, Beneath thy heavy burden bent, Climbing the perilous ascent, That leads to thy far-off abode;—
- O Worker, through life's toilsome hours, Whose hands, tho' weary oft, must ply The tasks, which to the utmost try And tax thine overstrained powers;—
- O Warrior, in life's battle field, Whom deadliest raging foes surround, Contesting every inch of ground, 'Thy soul the forfeit if thou yield;—
- O Learner, in life's painful school, Smarting beneath the frequent scourge, Which stern affliction wields, to urge Obedience to the Master's rule;—

Weary, faint, striving, full of grief, Pour out thy soul to God in prayer, And His responsive love, whate'er Thy need, will yield thee quick relief.

II.

But will the Majesty on High,
The inscrutable Eternal God,
Regard the steps by mortals trod,
And listen to a creature's cry?

Shall He whom Heaven and Earth obey,
Whose boundless thoughts extend beyond
All Heaven and Earth, to us respond
Touched by our pleadings when we pray?

We know Him not, our minds are dim And dark to fathom aught of His, Lost in the impenetrable abyss Of light, and what are we to Him?

And what amid the bright array
Of systems vast His power enspheres?
Their circles run thro' dateless years
While we are atoms of a day.

His laws are changeless,—His decrees
Are fixed,—His counsels cannot err.—
How shall the suit that we prefer
Affect His sovereign purposes?

And yet, 'tis His own voice from Heaven Invites us to His feet in prayer, With sweet assurance whatsoe'er We ask in faith it shall be given.

1866.

BEHIND THE VEIL.

"What hope of answer or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil!"
IN MEMORIAM.

Sweet flowers that shine amid the gloom, And blossom on the skirts of Death; That stir the soul to stronger Faith, And beautify the barren tomb. Ah, happy phantoms of the brain! 'Tis sweet to dream that parted friends Shall live to God's diviner ends.

In realms where we may meet again.

'Tis sweet to dream, and yet perchance The dream is all unreal as sweet. And hand with hand no more may greet. Nor countenance meet countenance.

'Tis sweet to dream behind the veil That sacramental glories burn. But when did ever friend return To prove the fond deceitful tale?—

I had a friend, whose life's eclipse Was tender as a maiden's dream. A smile, as of an angel-gleam, Played round about the parted lips.

He, dying, clasped me by the hand, And gently bade me not to weep;— Death stole upon him like a sleep;

And he was in the Shadowland.

A mystic shudder filled my brain, A whisper, like the voice of God, Seemed born of the sepulchral clod, "My Brother we shall meet again!"

Fond hope! vain dream! delusive faith! When shall the grim stern fact be told? All hope is buried in the mould; All links of love are snapt in Death.

Not so! We shall not always grieve, Not always seen is that which is: And life hath other forms than this; I cannot know but I believe.

1852.

BEFORE MARTYRDOM. PAUL

THE end has come, and these dank prison walls Will cease to hold me captive; these linked chains To bind; and the glad spirit, going forth To make her last and crowning sacrifice, Will leap into that clear unclouded light,

Towards which, aye yearning upward with desire, It still has seemed to grow upon my gaze Near and yet nearer, holding me above The sordid aims of purblind, worldly men, And beckoning on in my triumphant path.

Glory to Him, who first the radiant beam
Down-streamed, while sudden blindness smote the orbs
Of sense, that day, intent on my mad work,
I journeyed to Damascus! Glory to Him,
Both now and ever! that the same steadfast ray
Hath never ceased to shine about my steps,
Through all these years of toil and pilgrimage,
Whileas, Christ in me, with another soul,
Another self possessed, my life has worn;
So that the memory of what once I was,
Gamaliel's scholar in the days of yore,
Headstrong and proud, and blind with prejudice,
Seems but a dream of slumber long ago.

How wonderful as the mind ranges back,
And in the pictured retrospect recalls
The scenes which I have passed through, fellowships
That I have known, works for my Lord fulfilled,
And victories gained o'er mine own heart and sin;
How wonderful the grace which to this bourne
Hath led and kept me, till with hoary head,
That severed soon, shall silent witness give
To Him who yonder waits for me, I now
Rejoicingly can feel the fight is fought,
The course completed, and the crown at hand!

This yields an ample recompense for all,
I would not change in aught, e'en though I might,
The chequered, strange experience of my life.
The stripes and scourgings of my foes endured,
The bitter hatred of my countrymen,
The day I fought with beasts at Ephesus,
And that when the misguided heathen stoned
And left me, seeming dead, at Lystra's gate,
The cruel treachery that wrung my heart
When faithless Demas left me, the dread hour
When in sharp conflict with the messenger
Of hell, he planted in my flesh the thorn,
My perilous voyages upon the deep,

The night of shipwreck, on the island-coast, And all that in the course of Providence, Of hardship and of suffering I have known, Have been to me, through grace, as helps to bring The labouring pilgrim safely to his rest.

But one more conflict, only one, the last! The imperial tyrant in his tiger-lust Of human blood, must gloat his eyes on mine, To me most welcome, let mine shed attest My faith in that my Lord hath shed for me. O Blessed Cross, which I have gloried in! I see thee now, and kneeling low, lift up My soul in thankfulness and joy to Him, Who made thee precious to me.—Hark! they come. I hear the creak of bolts withdrawn, and doors That ope with iron clang, and heavy tramp Of guards about to lead me to my death. Farewell, my prison! thou hast been to me A house of sweet companionship with Christ; I go to change thee for that house above, Not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, With open eye upon the Master's face, To look, and be for aye with Him I love.

1869.

AN ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

I.

ETERNAL Spirit, who alone dost reign
O'er all unchanged, whilst all things change and
fade,

The vassals of Decay; and dost maintain
Thine undivided empire undismayed;
Before whose awful might e'en kings afraid
Shall hide their crowns, planets and suns grow dim,
And Creature-light return again to shade;
To Thee, throned 'mong the starry seraphim,
In praise adoring I would tune the lofty hymn!

II.

Blending my song with songs that from yon choir
Of angels echo thro' the realms of light,
Where thou dost reign: do thou my thought inspire,
Exalt my mind, and wing my words with might

To soar beyond the bounds of Day and Night,

Exulting in my God: Thyself impart;

And while my Muse pursues her venturous flight, O come, and take possession of my heart, And let no rival there beguile with treacherous art!

III.

How shall I praise Thee? Where begin to sing
Of unbeginning God? Oh! could I fly
To Earth's remotest bound upon the wing
Of morning-star, or backward glance employ,
Things to behold of Old Eternity
Ere Time was born, or wakened worlds sprang forth

From uncreated matter; yet should I
Fail to discover secret of thy Birth,
Thou unborn Deity, High Lord of Heaven and Earth!

IV.

Thou Cause of all Effects, who dost all cause
Disown, surpassing highest stretch of Thought;
Thyself beyond the utmost reach of laws
Known or unknown; by whom was Law first taught

To rule, and Order out of Chaos brought:

Time and Eternity to Thee are one;

Nor was there time, O God! when thou wert not, With baffled mind and awed, I here bow down To Him, to whom alone Time's anté-time was known.

V.

Or if I make thine attributes my theme,
How can I hope to give Thee as Thou art?
Beyond the measure of an angel's dream,
Their publication of the state of the st

Their noblest-offered strains in Heaven fall short Of thy perfections; nor can mind or heart

Of man of one Divinest lineament

Conception form, expression give, or part In fine analysis, where all are blent In one, yet multiform, Divine embodiment.

VI.

Yet, not all knowledge of Thyself hast Thou,
Mysterious One! witheld from human eye;
Or Man could walk alone with saddened brow.

Pent in this valley of mortality,

Doomed like a flower to bloom awhile and die,

Die without hope and perish off the field:

But Thou art open! Thee he may descry Amid the wonders thy creations yield,

And in the glorious page of Truth by Thee revealed.

VII.

Thou art not strange O God! Thou art not far From one, the least of all thy creatures: We

May view Thee ever near, in sky and star,

By mountain, field and flood, by shore and sea, And all thy works are but the types of Thee;

Thy Beauty and Magnificence are spread On every hand and fill immensity;

Thou dwellest 'mong the living and the dead;

The darkness owns Thy light, and the Great deep Thy tread.

VIII.

Where can I turn my gaze where Thou art not?
Thy hand controls the chariot of the sun;

And all day long, wherever feeling, thought, Or life exist, Thy Spirit moves upon

The vast of things; and when the day is done,

And Night, surrounded by her starry train,

Smiles on the sleeping earth, Thou art her crown,

Her glory; and assembled worlds the strain

Of praise hymn forth to Thee, nor hymn Thy praise in vain

IX.

There, as in ordered majesty they stand,

Or in harmonious measures move, they bear

Irrefragable proof of Forming Hand

And Wise Intelligence that set them there; To fool and sage alike they all declare

The Name of their Creator, and display

His Providential Power; and who shall dare

To view the fabric reared, and turn away

Of Thee Lord unconvinced? Only a madman may.

X.

Lives there the wretch that dares deny his God?

Though man be fallen and by guilt deprayed,
The gift of reasoning faculty bestowed

Hath this first truth on every mind engraved.

Hath this first truth on every mind engraved. E'en by mere intellect we must be saved

From degradation deep as this. Ah woe!

That Man should be to sin so deep enslaved, Some deem it highest knowledge to forego The evidence of God, so clear that all might know.

XI.

But not you worlds alone their God proclaim;
Were all from that fair sky at once erased,
And save this world Chaos returned the same
As erst, and even this world became a waste
Of shapeless matter, man from his own breast
Might still educe the ken of Deity;

In man Thine image dwells, albeit defaced; This very consciousness that lies in me Of life, not self-derived, declares that Thou must be.

XII.

But though our reasoning faculty can reach
To know the existence of Creative Mind,
Unaided Reason futile were to teach
Thy true relationship to humankind,

And our right path of life on Earth to find:

Thou God adored! we are not left alone

In darkness, for Thy sacred Word hath shined, A beam of light rayed from the Eternal throne, And made our deathless interest in Godhead known.

XIII.

The story of redemption written there

Makes light to beam upon the darkened mind;

And Hope dispels the terrors of despair,

That fly like clouds before the morning-wind;
And there a rebel race may pardon find;

The angered Deity lays by his wrafh,

Outstretching arms of mercy to mankind,

"Return again ye erring!" Jesus saith,

"And follow me; for Heaven lies straightway in the path."

XIV.

Ah! though our sins the sands upon the shore
Outnumber, Christ for guiltiest sinners died;
He in our stead the dreadful sentence bore,
The penalty endured. His bleeding side
A sheltering cleft for all is open wide;
The Way, the Truth, the Life to Him I fly,
And all my swilt and fear in Legus hide.

And all my guilt and fear in Jesus hide,
For he hath striven and won the victory,
Through Faith in Him assured, I Death and Hell defy.

XV.

In this, great God! thy fairest attribute,
My hymn shall find its climax, in thy grace
That doth Christ's righteousness to me impute,
Oh, may I wear it henceforth all my days!
Still stedfast will I magnify Thy ways
To men; and when my journey here is o'er,
My harp shall sound yet nobler notes of praise,
Mingled with angel-harps on that blest shore,
Where sorrow, sighing, sin shall vex me nevermore.
1856.

ODE TO HOPE.

BRIGHT herald of another clime, That lightest up the darkened Earth, And comest, like an angel-visitant, Whispering of Heaven.

Hail Hope to thee! Thy praise I hymn.
Celestial Hope, that bringest down
Assurance of a sweet untroubled realm,
Where storms are not.

Here all is dark, and wild, and waste, Involved in shadows of deep gloom, And nowhere can the soul a refuge find From grief and pain.

Here finds she but a frozen zone, Where brightest buds are earliest nipt, And Disappointment like the winter wind Dispels our dreams. All is unsafe, uncertain, void,
Behind, before is darkness all,
Death is on earth the only certain thing,
And Life a dream.

A phantom-bark upon the deep,
The boisterous deep, and tempest-driven,
That knows not whitherward she drifts, without
Pilot or chart.

Here all is sorrow, grief, and guilt;
This world's a theatre of sin,
And men the mimic actors, who play out
Their tragic parts.

And man is set at strife with man,
And deadly passions urge us on
To slay, deceive, to slander and betray,
And murder trust.

Then, like the leaves, we fall and rot,
And friend and foe meet common doom,
Go to the grave to feed the insatiate worm,
Among the dead.

And were this all the end of life,
How vain a thing and mean were man!
Our only portion here were life and tears,
Despair and Death!

All hail, Divine, Celestial Hope!
We are not wholly heirs of Death;
For the Immortal spirit cannot die;
Life is no dream.

The gateway of another world,
The path that leads to Hell or Heaven,
The trial that preludes a future life
Of bale or bliss.

We voyage not without a chart,
The everlasting Word of God
Is given to guide, o'er the tempestuous sea,
To sheltering haven.

They who refuse their course to steer According to the light vouchsafed, 'Tis true, find harbour none, but meet a fate Far worse than Death.

But he who, trusting, takes the Word, And shapes the tenor of his life Thereby, with Faith calmly reposed in God, Shall ne'er be lost.

Nor e'er shall Death be victor here, The Christian triumphs o'er the grave, The heir of Immortality, he hath A home in Heaven.

Hail Heavenly Hope! How oft have I, When, like a driven vessel, tost Upon the torrent of the foaming flood, Beheld thee near.

Above all Disappointment, thou
Hast been a bright and beacon star,
Shining upon the mariner's dark night
With gladdening beam.

Men have deceived me, Fortune frowned,
My noblest dreams oft flown afar,
Friends have proved false, and dear ones ceased to
love,
Thou hast not failed.

Sweet seraph art thou from above, Radiant with light and love from Heaven, Calling the gladsome sunshine out of shade, Morn out of night.

In sorrow I have turned away
From Earth's vain dreams and earthly joys,
And thou hast, higher joy and bliss revealed,
Making Earth Heaven.

Bringing far rapture from the skies, Transport and blessedness untold, Fair with the promise of undying day In you high world. That world where sighing is unknown, Where grief and sin may ne'er intrude, Where ransomed spirits everlastingly Rejoice in God.

No falsehood there, no touch of scorn, No blighting hatred or deceit, Nor friend is ever torn from bosom friend By cold mistrust.

Thither, sweet Hope, dost thou direct
My thought, and earthly things grow mean,
The pleasure, treasure, fame that Earth can give,
How brief, how vain!

I cast them from me as base coin,
Trampling on fortune, fame, and power,
Dreams that, like wantons, lure but to betray;
I trust in God.

In Him whose word betrayeth not, Whose promise to His Own is pledged Of an inheritance and home above, That cannot fade.

Mid all vicissitudes of life, Dear Word of God I take but thee For guidance, on the wild tempestuous main, Still undismayed.

And I have heard, or seemed to hear, Echoes of choral harmonies Awoke from harps by angel fingers touched, Prophetic strains.

The glory, wonder, heavenly dream,
And blissful ecstasy have been
Oft mine. Vain World! It hath no charms for me
Whom God hath called.

Called to partake of those delights,
That the redeemed ones share in Heaven,
Even here I have a foretaste of that land,
Through thee, loved Hope.

Hope, that hast ever stood me true
In every change, in every loss,
In darkness, storm and danger, thou hast been
My Comforter.

Still hast thou been with ready hand Bounteous in blessings, ever near, Allaying, in the dear Redeemer's name, The troubled waves.

Inspired by thee, I have looked up
In Prayer, beyond my mortal zone,
To Him who watches all things, and descried
My Father there.

Oh never leave me glorious Hope!
Whatever ill beset me here,
Until I gain possession of that land,
My Hope fulfilled!

1856.

LINES ON PRAYER.

When shadows gather round me, and dark doubt Weighs, like a brooding nightmare, on the breast, And all the heart is sick; when, wearied out With the wild conflict, she is doomed to wage Against the sore temptation, the tired soul Begins to yield, unable to restrain These carnal natural impulses, I fly To solitude and Thee, O God! and there, Shut up within my closet, in Thine ear Tell my complaining.

Oh! I never yet
Poured out in prayer my heart, O Lord! to Thee,
But thy sure answer of sweet solace came,
Came wingëd, like a dream, and yet no dream,
But beatific bright reality,
And numbed the sense of pain, and softly soothed
The jarring chords of being to one deep
Dissolving harmony, like that which rolls
From angel-harps along the courts of Heaven.

For never prayer fell dead upon Thine ear,
Thy ready ear attentive to our cries;
The promise of thy Word is pledged to Prayer,
The pledge of Him who never lied, and makes
Assurance doubly bright. By Faith we ask,
Through Faith receive the Heavenly Comforter,
Who with transporting beams descends, and bears
From off the mercy-seat a boundless boon,
A joy that overmeasures all our woes.

Then let the tempter come, my peace assail, Besiege my hope, and storm my citadel, With all the dread artillery of Hell, While I have Thee for refuge. I, by Prayer, Will conquer in Thy might, and not a bolt Shall harm my ramparts, nor a hostile blow My armour cleave. But Thou shalt be my shield, My helper in distress, my tower of strength, By Thee sustained I will rejoice, and last, My painful warfare o'er, through Thee will pass From conflict here to triumph in the skies, And wear the victor's crown with saints in heaven.

1855.

EUCHARISTIA:

A Song for the Harvest.

With thankful hearts, come let us raise
Pæans of jubiletic praise,
To Him who hath the bounteous harvest given:
The watchful care, the tender love
Of God, who reigns enthroned above,
Extol in strains aspiring unto Heaven!

Begin the song, ye rural swains,
Who plough the glebe and till the plains,
Adore His hand, who thus rewards your toil!
And ye, in citied homes who dwell,
With voices glad the concert swell,
For ye too share the blessings of the soil!

Let all with gratitude repair
In crowds to throng His fanes of prayer,
And render homage to the Lord of All—
Whose kindly gifts His open hand
Hath lavished freely on our land,
And sanctify the Harvest Festival!

He warmed the seed within the earth,
He made the sproutling spring to birth,
And the young blade moistened with gentle dews;
And, when, amid the spreading green,
The lovely wheaten bloom was seen,
He did the air with nurturing heat infuse.

He made the breeze-swept fields to dance, And wave in proud luxuriance; And when the corn within the ear was full, With ripening ray the sunlight beamed, And lo! the yellow harvest gleamed A sea of surging grain, how beautiful!

See from each farmstead, thorpe, and grange,
Forth the industrious reapers range,
And thrust the sickle in and pile the sheaves,
And gather up the golden grain,
And heap upon the labouring wain,
That 'neath the unwonted burden groans and heaves.

The winnowed corn o'erflows our stores,
This royal Autumn-time of ours—
For fifty years there hath not been its peer!
Then praise that God whose loving smile
Hath favouring beamed on Britain's isle,
And with His goodness crowned the flying year.

Shame on the unthankful heart and cold,
That would the song of praise withold,
From him who hath our plenteous harvest sent!
Wake, English hearts, with one accord,
And praise the Bounty of the Lord,
In hymns that shake the vaulted firmament!

ODE.

T.

And is there hope in Death?

Oh! not alone from Life's prolific womb,
Do Time and things of Time's dominion come.

The human soul is not a mere chance breath,
Blown by the wanton breeze from tomb to tomb;
But the large eye of Faith
Can peer beneath the curtained gloom,
And read abundant promises in Death.

II.

There is a mirth within the saddest wave;
Verdure will bloom upon the wildest waste;
Some happiness will cheer the lornest breast;
And sparks of warmth we glean from coldest flint;
And shall Eternity

Alone be deemed a void and shoreless sea?
There is a joy pavilioned in the grave,
An Immortality.

Oh! soul awaken to thy second birth, Transcend this clod of Earth; Soar to the summit of thy majesty, And in the end great Death shall set thee free From grosser element!

III.

Oh, who would cling to Earth?

How vain her boasted wealth, her boasted power!

The paltry trinkets of an hour,

A babe might scorn the bauble's worth.

O human soul, is this thy dignity?

Is this the mighty purpose of thy being?

And was it then that God created thee,

Thy little antic motions to pursue?

Oh! but that eye far-seeing

From Heaven looks down o'er all, looks down o'er thee,

And He, who did endue

Thee with the spirit of His living breath,

Shall claim its use in Death.

IV.

Shake off the heavy burden!
Say, what sweet spell hath Earth and earthly pleasure?
Hymn thou a higher measure.
Fulfil the sterner task of God appointed;
Fulfil the life to which thou wert anointed;
Contemn the mortal for the immortal treasure;
And Heaven shall be the peerless guerdon;
And thou, at length translated to the skies,
Shalt stand among the saints in Paradise.

\mathbf{V} .

What art thou lingering still
Among the festering clods,
The tainting pleasures of this living grave?
Ah! Imbecile and willing slave!
Why yield Corruption what alone is God's?
Oh! but assert the grandeur of the will;
Distrust not but aspire;
Rekindle all the yet unquenchëd fire;
And poised on outstretched wings of Faith,
Upward Immortal, far beyond the bar,
Till seated in the skies a shining star
Of Victory over Death!

VI.

What! Doubting and afraid? Why, why distrust the rainbow promises, That God in Heaven hath made To shine in token of great blessedness? Yet one, in days of yore, Did rend the bars of that mysterious gloom; He rived the bolts and cleft in twain the tomb; He threw the foe, and over Doom Sat throned conquerer. Twice wheeled the Night her ebon car Above the dead man's sepulchre, And the third morn he rose. Up to his Father's bosom he ascended, Amid the angel choir, For the dominion of the Fiend was ended. The Son of God had thrown the Arch Destroyer, And vanquished all our woes.

VII.

Oh human soul be strong!

A way is made for thee, the gates are riven,
And thou shalt join the throng

Of saints that crowd the palaces of Heaven.
For the dear sake of Christ,
Not one shall be of God despised,
That putteth trust above.

Oh mighty conquest of redeeming Love!
His bounteous blood was shed for all;
And they that will but call,
Believing, on the mercy of the Lord,
Shall reap the blessings of his rich reward.
Thus call upon His Name! To the large eye of Faith Is boundless hope in Death.

1853.

LINES WRITTEN IN CALAMITY.

Thus far along the bleak high-road of life,
Thy faithful hand hath led me; and amid
The toil and weariness and languid feeling
Of dull fatigue, Thy soothing voice hath been
A power to upbuoy, and nerve the soul
To struggle, and endure, and travel on
Towards that high hope, which beckons from afar,
With glory lighting up the distant goal.

Father in Heaven! How could I e'er have borne The fretting burden, and the carking care, The crowding ills that, still from year to year, Have gathered round me, like a tempest-cloud Hiding the joyous prospect which at first Beamed bright before me, when my heart was young, And hanging o'er my pathway thunder-charged, Ready to burst upon me, and devote To wreck and ruin all my hold on earth; But that, from every menace and grim frown Of adverse Circumstance, I still have turned, For solace and for aid, in Faith to Thee, Who ne'er hast left me desolate, but, when My need hath pressed the sorest, hast unlocked Some unexpected sources of supply.

So now, in dreariest, murkiest hour of all, The cloud above, the wilderness before, And barking at my heels the whole fell pack Of wolves let loose from grim Misfortune's den; O, not unmindful of past succours given, In Thee I rest, to Thee by faith I look, And trust Thy guiding hand to bring me through The perilous time in safety, and still make "All things to work together for my good."

Sleaford, May 23rd, 1873.

ASPIRATION.

Oh! there are often in the Christian's life
Times when the spirit glows with purer fire,
And bursting through the bondage of her strife
Holds blissful converse with her Heavenly Sire.

The Unseen Parent of the visible Earth,
The Spring upwelling, Beautiful and Good,
Eternal Being of forgotten birth,
Perennial youth and quenchless lustihood.

The constant orb, towards which the human soul Looks hopefully beyond Life's ocean waste; The steadfast starlight of the far off pole,

That whispers to the mariner of rest.

And shall he breast the dangerous driving foam;
And shall he ever gain the happy shore?
And shall he ever taste the sweets of home,
And dwell apart from care for evermore?

Oh truthful guarantee vouchsafed by God,
Of sweet surcease from sorrow and from care;
Though tempest-tost upon the throbbing flood,
The soul of man may find relief in Prayer.

Sweet Prayer! it is the mingling of the life With that Divinity of Life above: Therein the soul forgets her wearving strife, And knows the might of God's undying love.

To Him she rushes, like an ardent bride New-wedded to the bridegroom of her choice; Her being brims with Love's o'erflowing tide,

God crowns her chalice with immortal joys.

Oh blissful foretaste of the life to come, The life unknown alike to tears and time, Where joy for ever springeth from the womb Of things, and grows to never-ending prime!

Oh blissful vision of the marriage-day, The day whose sun shall never set in night, When holy being, freed from mortal clay, Shall wing the skies and wed primeval light!

Oh prophet-impulse bursting through the chain, The iron links that bind the soul to Earth; She bids farewell to thoughts of Death and Pain, And learns the secret of her second birth!

Oh glowing rainbow arching in the sky, The golden sunbeams glimmer through the shower, The darkness and the cloud are passing by, And light and warmth shall own the coming hour!

Oh priceless treasure, better far than gold And gleaming jewels are to miser's hand, Art thou to me, Sweet Prayer; and I behold Already the great gates of that high land!

Rush upward like an eagle towards the sun, And bathe unscorched amid the waving light: The morn and noon are thine, the twilight dun Will hide the living splendours out of sight.

Swift as an arrow darting up the air, Rending the thin transparent folds in twain, Do thou, my spirit, soar to God in Prayer, And grasp exultingly thy glorious gain.

Even as the Christ with bloody sweating brow
Threw all his strength into his last complaint,
Oh soul of mine! in eager prayer do thou
Enwrap thy utterance free from all constraint.

Up! Gird thee on the pinions of thy fire;
Scorn the dull worm that loves to crawl the sod;
Be Heaven the summit of thy strong desire;
And thou shalt win the opulence of God!

1852.

"IMMORTALITY ALONE CAN SOLVE THE

DARKEST OF ENIGMAS."-Young.

I.

What! hath the Bridegroom been, and borne thee hence, From this cold worn-out tenement? And are Thy wearyings over, and the sad expense Of never-satisfied desire? No more Shall grief disturb thee. Thou shalt ever lie, Couched on the Bridegroom's breast, and He shall smooth Thy tresses down, and kiss thee into joy, Till thou forgettest grief did ever claim thee. The death-bell tolls, but thou dost hear it not, For thou art listening to the marriage peals, And voices of sweet friends who welcome thee, New wedded to the Family of Heaven!

II.

And thou pale corse, lying so hushed in blessing, There is no shade of sorrow on thy brow, Nor any sigh escapes thy pallid lips, Thy parted lips on which a smile is playing. What! Art thou dreaming of the spirit's bridal? Pale slumberer in the lap of Mystery! Thy cold cheeks still retain their mantled blushes, And a white joy sits trembling on thy bosom, Thy folded hands imprison it. So sleep Beneath the flowers, and lie down with the dead!

LOVE.

'Tis sweet to wander out away beyond the haunts of men,
To leave the city far behind and seek the lonesome glen,
To catch the soft and stilly murmur of the waving trees,
And hear the wild notes of the bird come warbling on the
breeze.

To hark the merry waterfall, with cadence low and sweet, As gleefully it flings the freshening spray about our feet, Make music all around us, while the cloudless sky above Bends over us in beauty and looks down on us in love.

There's not a flower adorns the dell, nor leaf that clothes the tree,

Nor breeze that whispers on the air but tells of love to me, But speaks in language nobler far than wisest sage can time, Or poet weave in all the pompous eloquence of rhyme, Of that Eternal Father, who gave us life and breath, Who fashioned the bright heaven on high, the bounteous earth beneath.

And showers upon us evermore rich blessings from above, And makes the lowliest things to teem with tokens of His love.

There is no discord in the world to mar the happy strain, That echoes through the universe, no sorrow and no pain That God hath made; 'tis Man alone, who in this Paradise Of love and beauty, that on every hand around us lies, In selfish mockery of God hath hushed great Nature's song, And made of Life a hideous scene of sin and spoil and wrong:

'Tis Man alone, of all that breathes in sight of Heaven above.

Hath jarred the harmony of life and blurred the page of love.

O Son of Man! go forth with me into the fields and learn The lesson of a nobler life, and back to life return! For dead thou art, whilst like a worm thus grovelling on the sod;

Oh let the faëry page of Nature win thee back to God! In flower, in field and star the broadly-written lesson scan, Of the great Parentage of God the Brotherhood of Man; There's love is writ in glade and glen, and in the sky above, The true vocation of the soul is Love, Immortal Love.

1856.

THE CHURCH OF GOD.

THE Church of God! The Church of God!
Her glories, ah! what bard shall sing?
As well the worm that crawls the sod,
You ether might aspire to wing,
As human thought and human speech
The height of such a theme to reach.

O for the harp of mighty sound,
The shepherd minstrel swept of yore!
When in prophetic trances bound,
He sang, on Jordan's winding shore,
That day-dawn of celestial birth,
When God's great light shall fill the earth:

Or, when, a king, the courts he trod Of Zion's columned sanctuary, And hymned the praises of his God, In numbers that shall never die; That I might emulate his strain, And wake my anthem not in vain!

Or, for that aged exile's pen,
To whom, in lonely Patmos, came
The dream of that grand bridal, when
Her raging foes all clothed with shame,
The Church shall reign, adorned, a bride
Throned at her Heavenly Bridegroom's side!

How glorious were the things they told Of Salem in her ancient pride! When, ere her sons to bondage sold, Or ere the Babylonian tide Of conquest o'er her swept, she made Israel exult, her foes afraid. Her royal throne of David's line,
Her armëd hosts to battle poured,
Her feasts, her Oracles divine,
Her sacred rites, her fane adored
Cresting the brow of Zion hill
Live in her prophets' pages still.

But as the golden blaze of noon

Exceeds the first faint light of dawn,
And as the beauty of the moon,
The meteor's radiance swift-withdrawn,
The Church's glory doth surpass
All, that old Salem's ever was.

A city unlike those the hands
Of man hath built, his art designed,
The boast of continents, she stands
The work of an Almighty mind,—
(The mind of Him Who sits above,)—
The outgrowth of Eternal Love.

With her He dwells, in her He reigns,
By her His triumphs deigns to spread,
His empire upon earth maintains;
And marches on with conquering tread
Back to Himself the world to win,
And rout the hostile brood of sin.

And who of all the earth-born race
Can with her favoured sons compare?
Souls whom the choice of Sovereign grace
In contemplation blest, or ere
The worlds sprung forth, or light appeared,
Or Chaos the Creator heard.

Elect, Redeemed by Blood Divine,
For them the King of Glory died;
Their hearts, the Paraclete, His shrine
Of rest hath made and purified,
And with His holy virtues deckt,
God's own bright image to reflect.

And whose the honours that can vie
With those her meanest subject wears?
The glittering crown of empery
Burns not with lustre like to hers,
To whom to mirror forth, 'tis given,
The orbed loveliness of Heaven.

Her peace which passeth worldly thought,
Her hope that soars beyond the sense,
Her joy with speechless rapture fraught,
Her union with Omnipotence,
Her angel-guard—O, these are things,
Which set her saints o'er thronëd kings!

The Church of God; on history's page
Trace out the victories she hath won;—
What warrior's arm? what work of sage
Hath wrought the marvels she hath done?
And conquests mightier, more sublime,
Will yet be her's in coming time.

The End of Time to her shall bring
No end of days, no end of joy;
In Heaven, enthroned with Christ her King,
His praise shall aye her powers employ,
While the last line of Human Story
Tells of her still unfolding glory!

1870.



Poems of Fantasy.

THE LAND OF DREAMS.

THERE'S a realm, I know it well,
Haunted as by magic spell;
When disquieted by care,
To that region I repair;
For I have a garden there,
Lying deep in solitude,
In the hollow of a wood;
And sweet spirits there are singing
Soft and soothing melodies,
And a myriad blooms are flinging,
Underneath the open skies,
Tender fragrance all abroad;
While the sound of rippling streams
Fills the happy neighbourhood—
'Tis the golden land of dreams.

On the pleasant lawn to lie,
While the lagging hours go by,
Lazily creeping, oh, 'tis sweet!
And to see the fairies fleet,
Tripping, tripping, two by two,
All that magic garden through,
To the palace of their queen,
Hidden in that ancient wood,
Sole intruders on the scene
Of delightful solitude.

Only sometimes, as I lie Gazing on the cloudless sky, Shadows dim and spectres grim Seem athwart my glance to swim, Dismal things, that intervene Me and that fair sky between, Raised as by some demon's spell, And mutter things too terrible For me in mortal speech to tell, And mar the beauty of the scene.

1860.

IDEALITY AND ART.

While I sit dreaming,
And tasking my soul,
In substance, to shape me
Her glorious ideal;
Days and hours still escape me,
The hasty years roll,
And Fancy's fair seeming
Is mocked by the real.

Ah! why should the vision,
So clearly descried,
Elude my endeavour
Its image to paint?
Is it fated for ever
In dreamland to hide,
Through the hand's indecision,
That trembles to taint?

This, this in all ages,
The burden hath been
Of the artist's complaining,
Whate'er he hath wrought,
His ideal ne'er attaining
The work which is seen,
Is not that which engages
The soul of his thought.

1870.

SPRINGTIDE.

I.

At the open casement, one Spring day, Flowers were budding, birds were singing songs of May, And soft perfumes by the breeze round were blown, With my heart's own darling I sat all alone.

II.

The wool-work on her knee idle lay, One can only sport with dream on such a day, And the dream which our twin fancies gaily wove, Was the dear old heart-dream born of love.

III.

With claspëd hands she looked across the lawn, For on the eager soul there brake a wondrous dawn; And I,—one little word were bliss to me,—So I whispered in her ear, "I love thee."

IV.

Flushed her lily cheek and brow rosy red, Hushed my beating heart within me with great dread, Though I knew that she was mine, for a breath Might have filled me with despair worse than death.

V.

Though her lips scarcely moved or uttered aught,
The pressure of her hand revealed the thought,
That nestled in her bosom like a dove,—
"I am thine! Thou art mine,"—Oh, the music of Love!

VI.

She turned her trustful eyes and looked fondly in my face,

Then her head drooped on my shoulder, and she sank in my embrace,

On the blossom of her lips, like a bee hiving bliss, My happy spirit summered in a long, long kiss.

1859.

SERENADING.

I GAVE my spirit leave to play
Mong thoughts and fancies fresh and gay,
And wove them in a lightsome lay;
Then said, this song of mine shall bear
My heart in words to Juliet, ere
To-morrow's sunshine wake the day.

I took my lute, at moonlight hour,
And sat beneath my Juliet's bower;
There sang, to notes that in a shower,
Of melody fell trembling round,

My verses; wondering if their sound To flash my soul to her's had power.

Now will she wake, and will she rise? What blisses or what agonies Hang on a minute!—Open flies

The casement; then a smile, but one, Turns earth to Heaven. Blest song, that won

That smile from out my Juliet's eyes.

1868.

UNDER THE GARDEN-BOUGH.

T.

UNDER the garden-bough,
In the blue summer-weather,
While the birds were singing their songs of love,
And the broad sun at noon rode proudly above,

We sat together,
Earnestly silent, we scarce knew why,
Though the love in the glance of either eye
That glistened, or breathed in the deep-drawn sigh,
Might have answered us why so silently,

All in the blue summer-weather, We sat together Under the garden-bough.

II.

Under the garden-bough,
In the blue summer-weather,
While the burr-bee flew from flower to flower,
Humming and joying the livelong hour,
We sat together:

And our hearts were full of a joy unspoken, For still the silence was unbroken, And thy hand in mine was laid for token Of all the love that was unspoken;

But ere we left we vowed a vow, To love for evermore, as now Under the garden-bough. III.

Under the garden-bough.—

Ah, pledges are too idly spoken!

Our hearts grow cold with the flight of the hours,

And the flowers of Love are but fading flowers,

And yows are often broken.

Alone I sit and sigh and moan, As I think of the days for ever gone, Flown like birds of the summer flown,

And their glories fallen like the Autumn leaves strewn,

All shred from the garden-bough.

Alone, alone, and where art thou?

Ah, idle pledge and broken vow!

I know thee false and faithless now.

Bereft of love, of hope bereft, Oh! what to me in life is left, But memory, tears and sorrow?

A friendless man to weep and sigh,

To weep and vainly borrow,

From the dear days of youth gone by, Remembrance of the love that I

In kisses sealed upon thy brow, Under the garden-bough.

1855.

IN A WOOD.

The breezes of summer are breathing,
So lightly, the leaves are scarce stirred;
And we hear, in the branches above us,
The tremulous notes of a bird.

The air it is laden with fragrance,
The flowers are crowding our feet,
And together embraced we are sitting
In the thick-sheltered woodland retreat.

I feel thy heart bounding and beating,
I toy with thy radiant hair,
And pluck from thy lips, with my kisses,
The joys which lie nestling there.

I gaze on thy sweet upturned features,
Returning the love-looks that shine
In the bright-beaming heaven of thy glances,
And flash my whole soul into thine.

The world with its struggles and passions
For us in oblivion lies,
For we are a world to each other,
And Love is our souls' Paradise.

Ah! Whither has Memory led me?
What subtle enchantment hath cast
O'er my soul, that the years she retraces
And lives in that dream of the Past?

The maiden a shop-keeper married,
Has children for whom she makes tea,
And 'tis whispered, that she and her husband,
Do not over-nicely agree.

And our paths in the world lie asunder,
A thing which I do not regret,
Though sometimes that day in the woodlands,
Comes back to my memory yet.

1865.

THE ROSEBUD.

WE wandered out in the garden,
The linnet sang in the tree,
My love she spied a rosebud,
And plucked it and gave it to me;
I kissed the beautiful rosebud,
Dear Love, that thou gavest to me,
And that summer-day, in the garden,
I gave my heart to thee.

Three days in a vase in my chamber,
I cherished my flower with pride,
And watched, with a sweet and boyish delight,
Its petals opening wide;
Until it had blossomed a queenly rose,
And then my flower I took,
And carefully laid between the leaves,
Of an old and saintly book.

Three years the maid did hold my heart,
In the casket of her own,
Till the beautiful bud of passion had grown
A fragrant rose, full blown;
She drained its tender fragrance,
And then, ah! woe the day!
Unlocked the casket of her heart,
And flung my heart away.

In the saintly book I was reading to-day,
Forgetful awhile of my woes,
When I turned o'er a leaf and there beheld
A withered faded rose;
It breathed of the past, of that summer day
In the garden where it grew,
And I dropped a tear o'er my withered flower,
And my heart-love withered too.

1861.

AN OLD LOVE-LETTER.

A LETTER this, which tells her love,
When sent, I cannot now recall;
Spared just to wring my heart again,
I thought that I had burnt them all.
O hazel eyes and golden hair!
This missive brings you back to view;
Truly, my heart, the maid was fair,
Fair, let me add, and faithless too!

Thou pretty lie, so sweetly penned,
Does e'er thy writer think of me?
'Tis many years since last we met;
I wonder, if still fair she be?
Pink letter, thou hast lost thy scent,
Perchance her beauty too is gone,
Wrinkled the brow, and worn the cheek,
That once with love I doated on.

Love-words! ah, light indeed as air!

Haply her heart is heavy now,
If sad, not mine her griefs to share;
I wish her well!—But letter, thou

Art overbold to mind me thus,
Of dreams that never may return;
A twirl, a twist! what art thou now?
A pipelight only fit to burn.

1865.

MY THREE LOVES.

My first love, she was a rosy blonde,
But all too young for marriage,
So her guardian thought and parted us,
And sent her to school in a carriage,
Hurrah

And sent her to school in a carriage.

My second, she was a laughing brunette,
And lured me to offer her marriage;
We courted three years, then she jilled me,
And went off with a lord in a carriage,
Hurrah!
And went off with a lord in a carriage.

My third, oh I thought her an angel from Heaven,
When she gave me her hand in marriage;
But Death entered my door, and my bride went forth,
Borne away to her grave in a carriage,
Hurrah!

Borne away to her grave in a carriage.

Ah! then I was young, now I'm old and poor,
And past all mirth and marriage;
But there's some-one is hewing a plank for me;
And soon I shall ride in a carriage,
Hurrah!

And soon I shall ride in a carriage!

MIRABEL MAY.

O Mirabel May! when I saw you first,
Your's was not the beauty that dazzles men,
Yet I felt that a light on my path had burst,
And a new life was given for the old life then;
For the aimless spirit had found an aim,
And a hope, worth living for, lent its ray,
Might I nestle close to its warm bright flame,
And you were that hope, sweet Mirabel May!

O Mirabel May! for many a day,
As the bee round the bell I hovered anear,
To watch the smile on the red lips play,
And list to the music that ravished mine ear,
When the clear voice spake, or the silvery laugh
Brake forth; and you led and lured me on,
To reach at the chalice I never might quaff,
O Mirabel May! was it kindly done?

For Mirabel May, as across the years,
I look back, there comes that one small face,
Comes at the door ajar, and peers
Into the void heart's empty space;
And I feel that my life has missed its mark,
And think how all had been other to-day,
Had you cherished, as well as kindled the spark,
Or never had crossed my path, Mirabel May!

1869.

BY THE SEA-SIDE.

I sat on the beach by the waters
And gazed far out on the Sea,
While the restless song of the Ocean
Came borne on the breeze to me;

With its magical intonations
And its wild weird minstrelsy,
Like a voice of chastened sorrow
From the days and the years gone by.

And out on the far horizon,
In the light of the setting sun,
I saw the stately vessels
Sail onward, one by one.

Till one by one, they faded,
Amid the dying day,
Like the shapes of our youthful visions,
That as swiftly glide away.

And, as slowly the gathering shadows
Descended o'er shore and sea,
I thought of the dream and the shadow,
Thus, imaged out to me.

The eager dream of boyhood,
When, out on the Ocean of life,
The early song of the spirit
Is heard above the strife.

A song unburdened by sorrow, Like an angel-voice from above, In this evil world that whispers Of Liberty, Truth, and Love.

Ere we have to front the battle,
And breast the storms of fate;
Ere we make our sad acquaintance
With Tyranny, Falsehood, and Hate.

Till at length in the thick of the contest,
That all our hope derides,
In the wail of lamentation,
The song of our youth subsides.

And like those vessels fading Amid the dying day, Our cherished aspirations, And dear hopes pass away.

And Darkness and desolation
Descend on the soul in pain,
That still looks vainly backward,
On days that can come ne'er again.

Till, like a shelterless vessel
On the wild tumultuous wave,
The spirit's one desire
Is the haven of the grave.

And at length the night so longed for Creeps round with welcome Death, And the soul of man returneth To the God who gave him breath.

And thus, as, with strange emotion,
I gazed far forth on the Sea,
The song and the surge of the Ocean
Seemed to image life to me.

But e'en like those vessels departed
To lands across the wave,
I know that the soul shall inherit
A realm beyond the grave.

A better and holier region,
A brighter and happier shore,
Where the tumult, the strife, and the sorrow
Shall vex her nevermore.

1856.

THE OLD HOME.

Once more! 'tis the home of my fathers, And this is the lawn where I played Of old, with my youthful companions, And danced with my own little maid.

It stands, 'mid its green nest of poplars,
The same as I knew it of yore;
But, alas! 'tis a stranger would greet me,
On lifting the latch of the door.

The hopes and the fears that I cherished,
When within its loved shelter I dwelt,
Are dead, and the old self is perished,
Nor feels the heart then as it felt.

For much thro' the world have I wandered, And much of its sorrow have known; And the idols, that once had my homage, Are all from their places o'erthrown;

And the dear ones are scattered or buried, Who made home so precious to me; And the sweet little maid of my boyhood Another hath borne o'er the sea.

The old home and unchanged! but how changed
To him who revisits the scene!
A mournful memorial, proclaiming
The ruin of all that hath been!

And I turn, with a feeling of anguish,
To leave the familiar place;
For my home and the home of my fathers
Is no more the home of our race.

1868.

PHANTOMS.

THERE are phantoms all around us, Only minds of vulgar thought, By the walls of sense that bound us, Narrowed in, behold them not.

But the poet, with his vision Reaching forth thro' regions wide, Sees, with clearer soul-precision, Things by others undescried.

Shapes of varied form and feature Making many a motley throng, Singing to the tuneful creature The weird numbers of his song.

Some are spirits clad in splendour, Starry crowned and sunny drest; Some are maids with glances tender, Smiles that penetrate his breast. Some are shapes that weep in sorrow, Stirring all his sympathy; Some remembered features borrow, And they gaze reproachfully.

Some are merry; laughing spirits, Some do leer and curl the lip, And one here and there inherits The wise face of authorship.

So they come and dance about him,
Forming many a motley throng,
Melt him, grieve him, tease him, flout him,
Weave the measures of his song.

Seven stanzas! Soul of Heine!
About phantoms what a fuss.
Always, when the weather's shiny,
Does my fancy riot thus.

1865.

'TWAS ALL A DREAM.

T.

'Twas all a dream; five years it lasted;
Broke, like a bubble, at length my heart;
Pleasant sighs on a woman wasted,—
Our spirits are far enough now apart.
Not made for each other. But had it ended
Another way, with an altar-vow,
Think'st thou that matters had then been mended,
Or that then thou hadst happier been than now?

II.

Perhaps so! yet I should rather doubt it;
For Time works many a wondrous change;
Her heart! Let me deem I am better without it;
Of all God's creatures there's none more strange
Than a woman who loves, then weds another;
Veers to a meaner heart,—what worse?
Methinks had she been my children's mother,
She had only made my life a curse!

III.

At least 'tis as well for me to think so,
Seeing that now she is his, not mine;
And after all, it was something, to drink so
Deep a draught of Love's golden wine;
Sweet was the blossom as long as it lasted,
And tho' 'twas blossom and nothing more,
Tho' the luscious fruit never came to be tasted,
Yet I might have found a worm at the core!

1865.

THEN AND NOW.

T.

Years ago together,
I remember well,
It was summer weather,
And the soft rain fell,
My one cloak was round us
Thrown to shelter thee,
And the thoughts that bound us
Brought but ecstasy.

II.

Many years have vanished,
Since I saw thy face;
Dreams of love are banished
From their olden place;
Thy face, should I know it,
Could I see thee now?
To thy mirror show it,—
What? a wrinkled brow!

III.

Silvered are thy tresses,
And thy beauty gone,
And thy heart confesses,—
"These he once looked on,
Looked and praised."—I hear thee,
Or in fancy hear.—
These would scarce endear thee,
If I now were near.

IV.

Perhaps 'twas not intended
That our dream should last;
What was once is ended;
'Twas a pleasant Past;
Even now 'tis pleasant,
In the retrospect,
O'er it, in the Present,
Sometimes to reflect.

V.

But thy portrait send not
Any day to me;
For I think 'twould lend not
One new charm to thee;
I will but remember
What thy Spring-time was;
As for thy December,
Show it to thy glass!

1865.

AT A STILE.

'Tis a still calm evening in summer, Unheeded the hour grows late, And the maiden and I are sitting On the stile by the churchyard gate.

The soft and silvery moonshine
Streams down with a lustre that laves,
In its light, the ivied turret
And the sad and silent graves.

But no dull feeling of sadness
Intrudes into either breast,
As we talk in pleasantest whispers,
And her heart to mine is prest.

Oh! fearest thou not the spectres
That haunt these abodes of the dead?
And the hoot of the owls in the distance,
Does it wake no shuddering dread?

And sweetly the maid replieth,—
"I love and I cannot fear,
With me all else is forgotten
When thou, my Beloved art here.

If I were alone in the churchyard,
I should cross it with hurrying tread,
I should tremble at every tombstone,
And fear to meet the dead.

I should startle to hear the rustle
Of grass on each mounded grave,
And see a ghost, in each corner,
But now, Love makes me brave.

With pride I kissed the maiden, As thus she so sweetly replied; But e'en then an unseen spectre Was standing by her side.

For this happened I said in the Summer, But ere the Autumn had shred The leaves from the beechen branches, She too lay with the dead.

And the love, which, that night in the moonshine
To me was so fondly given,
Is my treasure on earth no longer,
But a hope enshrined in Heaven.

1870.

SAILING.

The night has dropped down on the waters, We enter the fisherman's bark, And urged by the fresh-blowing breezes We sail far away in the dark.

The boat dances over the billows,
The lights on the shore fade away,
But above us the star-lamps are shining,
And the moon with her silvery ray.

At the helm the old pilot is sitting,
His locks they are straggling and white,
Ah! many a pair of young lovers
Have voyaged with him ere to-night.

The maid nestles close to my bosom,
Held fast in a loving embrace,
And with glances that beam in the moonshine,
Looks earnestly up in my face.

"And whither," she says, "are we going So far to the West, o'er the sea? "Tis time, love, the boat were returning, For mother is waiting for me."

Sweet maid! though thy mother be waiting, No mother to-night wilt thou see, Our pilot is bent on a voyage, And means thee to share it with me.

A voyage that brooks no returning Again to you wearisome shore, O'er deeps that thou never hast traversed, 'Neath stars thou ne'er sawëst before.

Beyond us are beautiful islands
That lie under tropical skies,
And one, love, that thou shalt be queen of,
And sway with the light of thine eyes.

Thine eyes that so sweetly enchant me!—
The maid drops a tear in the brine,
But nestles the heart, in her bosom
Wild-beating, more closely to mine.

"And if to return to my mother,
The pilot forbids,"—she replies,—
"And we must sail on to that island
Which lies under tropical skies,

O swear! in that isle of the tropics Thou never wilt leave me, alone; But hold me still close to thy bosom, For ever and ever thine own!" O Fear not, thou dear little maiden, But only sail onward with me, Still thus in my face looking upward, And anything I'll swear to thee!

So on in the silvery moonshine,
And watched by each glittering star,
Away to the West o'er the waters,
I bear my sweet darling afar.

1865.

EMIGRA.

T.

Thou art gone; and I am left
Of my guiding star bereft,
Like a lone bark on the sea,
Which the winds urge fearfully,
Through the dark and clouded night,
With an unresisted might,
On to where the surges roar,
Breaking on the rocky shore,
Till it strikes and mast and deck
Shattered lie, a piteous wreck.

II.

Perished are the hopes, that erst In this too fond breast I nurst; And my heart, an empty shrine Where rank weeds and briars entwine, Growing in the vacant space That once held a form of grace, No more echoes to the sound Of soft music wandering round, In melodious worship poured To its deity adored, Hears alone a dismal voice Moaning of departed joys, And a beauteous idol gone, Worshipped, loved and doated on.

III.

Never, but in memory, More wilt thou return to me. Still as in some garden old,— Where o'er the unloosened mould Trail the untended vagrant plants, And a beauty still enchants The eye, 'mid the neglected scene, Relique of that which once hath been,— I shall wander and recall. Blisses, that did once enthral Heart and brain and soul and sense, Born of Love's omnipotence; Finding many a lingering trace Of the genius of the place, Under whose presiding care, Once it bloomed and flourished fair. But whose presence haunts no more Sunny lawn and fairy bower, And the guardian spirit flown, All is desolate, wild and lone.

IV.

Ah! 'tis this that makes my woe, That the joy of long ago Miser memory yet retains, That the Phantom still remains Of the form that walked in pride, Life and beauty, by my side; And though thou art gone, that yet, Thee my soul can ne'er forget.

1869.

ANGELA.

They say thou art dead my Beautiful,
That thy life's young dream is over;
They say that Death giveth never an ear
To the wild "Come back!" of the lover.

They tell me, no more in these passionate arms Of mine shall I ever hold thee; That thy narrow grave is already made,

And waiteth to infold thee.

And my heart-breaking cry goeth up through the Night,

To the gates of Heaven pleading. Whither the angels have borne thee away. Of me and my love unheeding.

'Tis said, that crowned with glory there, Beyond the starry portal, Thou hast forgotten thy love to me,

In the light of a love immortal.

But 'tis false, for thy vows to me are rledged. The vows of a stainless spirit; And I know that to Love and to me thou art true. In the Heaven thou dost inherit.

And though dead to the world, thou art not dead To me and to my sorrow: Though cold is the clay, they will bear away From me to the churchvard to-morrow.

But e'en now in thy Father's house above, That mansion of light and wonder, Thou art bound to the Earth by links of love, That Death cannot rend asunder.

Alive thou art in this heart of mine; Oh! more alive than ever. The woman is dead; but the angel and I Shall now be parted never.

Henceforth, whatever sunbeams shine Or storms of sorrow wrestle, That angel, known of me alone, Within this heart shall nestle.

Yet one more kiss for the cold, cold clay, That lies so calm in slumber; But for thee, dear angel-guest, a love Through years without end or number: A love through life, and till herald Age Shall give the spirit warning Of the Maker's will, and till Death shall ope The gates of the marriage-morning;

And on through all the beautiful years
Of everlasting wonder,
When the vows which we have vowed on Earth
Shall find fulfilment yonder.

They say thou art dead, my Beautiful!

That thy life's young dream is over,
But I know where the dreamer dwells,
And her dreams are still of her lover.

1856.

AT A GRAVE.

The rank green grasses are waving,
The night-wind trembles and sighs,
With a low and plaintive murmur,
O'er the grave where my sweetheart lies.

Her eyelids are fast closed in slumber,
Her heart, it lies hushed in her breast,
And the worms that are crawling around her
Disturb not her tranquil rest.

On my sweetheart's grave I am sitting, While tear follows anguishing tear, And singing a song in my sorrow, That she will not wake to hear.

No more can the sound of my singing The color call up in her cheek; No more will her pulses flutter With joy, at the words that I speak.

No more, till the Day of Judgment, Will she rise from her cold dark bed, When the sound of the angel's trumpet Shall startle all the dead. Oh! then, in that resurrection, Will the old delight return, And once more for me her bosom With love all fondly burn?

O Grave! Break, break thy silence, Declare thy secret to me, And say, in the end of the ages, On that morn, if thus it shall be?

If my sweetheart then awaking,
I shall find her to me still true?
And clasp her mine for ever,
In that life strange and new?

But in vain, to tell of its secret,
I question the heedless grave;
I hear but the sigh of the night-wind,
Where the rank green grasses wave.

1865.

OVER THE DEEP.

In vision I wandered
One night to the shore,
And saw the clear moonbeams
Dance soft on the wave:
A silken-sailed shallop
Leapt up to the beach,
I entered, and lightly
We skimmed o'er the sea.

"O, gray, grizzled helmsman, Say where are we bound? And whose is the figure-head White on the prow?" He answered—"The haven Will greet us, anon: And her's is yon figure, Who waits for thee there." The mermaids are singing.
Sweet songs all around,
They breathe but one burden
Of mystical tone;
It sounds like an echo
Of days that are past,
And the lean, wrinkled pilot
Has tears in his eyes.

O'er the foam-crested billows,
We've gone many leagues,
And the gray pilot murmurs
"The port is in sight."
We enter the harbour,
We land on the quay,
And my long buried darling
Is claspt to my heart.

1864.

THE PHANTOM.

I LOVE the tender white moonbeam,
That peers through my window at night
For then, 'mid the gloom, a bright phantom
Appears to my wondering sight.

I know 'tis the form of the maiden
I loved, when my spirit was young,
When I drank from her lips the wild kisses,
And hung on the words of her tongue.

Her cheeks they are paler than marble, But the love-light still dwells in her eye; And her tresses fall, waving around her, Like radiance that streams from the sky.

So noiseless she glides through my chamber, I hear not her step on the floor; But I see the same grace in her movements That ravished my senses of yore.

She whispers, the tones are sepulchral, But oh! they are music to me; "Dear Love, in my grave I am lonely, And weary of waiting for thee. "How long from my side wilt thou linger, And nurse the wild grief at thy heart? Say, are we not vowed to each other? What is it then holds us apart?

And nearer she comes to embrace me, And presses her cold lips to mine; Then fades like a thin mist, and leaves me Alone with the pallid moonshine.

1863.

A VOICE FROM THE TOMB.

I am sitting alone in my chamber,
The firelight flares red on the wall,
And I seek from the years that are vanished
The form of the lost to recall.

O, maiden! whom once here beside me, I clasped in a loving embrace, And toyed with thy bright golden tresses, And lived in the light of thy face;

Ah! where is the truth of the pledges, Sweet-sealed with thy kisses of yore, That for years now our hearts have been severed, And here I behold thee no more?

Hark! I hear a voice mournfully singing:—
"I cannot come back, love, to thee;
I am wed to a cold cruel bridegroom,
Who keeps jealous guard over me.

"The door of my prison is marble,
The worm is my house-mate alone,
And the bloom that once ravished thy senses,
For aye from my features is gone.

"Yet still, if, with tender affection,
Thy lone heart is yearning for me,
There is room for thee down in our dwelling,
And a pillow made ready for thee.

"And methinks that the jealous-eyed bridegroom Will welcome a guest to the home,
So he bring but his broken heart with him,
And come as a corpse to the tomb."

1863.

STORM-DRIVEN

WITH a desolate heart I wandered,
Alone by the sea-beaten shore,
On the beach the billows were breaking,
With loud and boisterous roar.

The winds were howling around me,
Like hell-hounds escaped from the chain,
And the flail of the maddened tempest
Scourged ruthless the agonized main.

Far inland a flock of sea-gulls
With screams affrighted fled;
And above me, in dense rolling masses
Of vapour, the storm-clouds were spread.

And I thought how the roar and the tempest,
The winds and the waves at strife,
Resembled the woes that had shattered
My beautiful dream of life.

How my heart, like the troubled ocean, Had been lashed into wild unrest, By the storms that had swept across it, And left in my lonely breast,

But the wreck of the hopes and feelings, That, like barks on the joyous tide Full-sailing, had danced there, so buoyant In my days of youth and pride.

THE DAYS LONG AGO.

I.

From the dim sepulchres of vanished days
Come spectral visitants on Memory's mission,
Sweeping along old-trodden hallowed ways,
Like the forgotten features of a vision
Dreamed in the nights long ago.

II.

They come like lingering messages of love,

Too long delayed to save the broken-hearted;
They come like heavenly voices from above

To friends on earth, from other friends departed

In the dear days long ago.

III.

Like surging murmurs echoed in lone caves,
Among the waters by the syrens haunted;
Like midnight moanings heard among the graves,
Deep hid in glens and hollow groves enchanted
In the wild time long ago.

IV.

With wistful whispers of the land of Death,
That shroud in calm like silence all the spirit,
They speak to me, and awe with solemn breath,
And yield what woful wealth I dare inherit
From the dear days long ago.

1854.

TO A WILD-FOWL FLYING.

BEAUTIFUL bird of the summer-time, Sailing across the blue firmament, Under what star of good omen Hadst thou thy friendly nativity? Thou hast no check on thy liberty,
Thou hast no care to disquiet thee,
Voyaging where'er thou listest,
Free-hearted light-wingëd wanderer!

Stranger to all the keen jealousy, Avarice, passion and vanity Torturing hearts that are human, How unalloyed is thy happiness!

Nought of the pinchings of poverty, Nought of the heartache of luxury E'er came to ruffle thy spirit. Robbing thy breast of tranquility.

Free from the woes of humanity,
Free from ambition and enmity,
Following the bent of thine instinct,
True to the nature bestowed on thee;

Here, in my sorrow and anguishing, Storm-battered, grief-worn and world-weary, Hating the tumult around me, Chiding the humour of Destiny;

Happy bird! How I could envy thee, Eagerly yearning to follow thee, Far, far away from these regions Haunted by gloom and despondency.

Oh, to escape from captivity,
Bursting the chains of Society!
Lend me the wings of thy freedom,
Beautiful bird of the summer-time!

Sleaford, 1873.

THE HEART'S DEAD.

My heart is as a grave
That holds the buried Past;
There sleep the forms of those I loved
In years which fled too fast;
And no one knows what in my heart I bear,
So silently the dead are slumbering there.

Oftimes I seem most gay,
When most I feel my gloom:
As I have seen young children play,
Above some churchyard tomb,
Making the place to ring with joyous sound,
As though there were no corpses underground.

But when I muse alone,
In secret reverie,
And wizard Memory's spells are thrown
Around my heart and me,
The buried forms of those I loved arise,
And pass before my gaze in spectre guise.

1870.

MEMORY'S SPIRIT-WORLD.

Off I sit with spirit weary, in my chamber dull and dreary,
Musing on the days departed and the morning of my life,
Days that never knew to borrow any tone or tint from
sorrow,

Ere Experience came and taught me all the sadness of the strife.

Then how bright the future glistened, and my soul with rapture listened,

Standing tiptoe at the open portal of the coming time, To glad strains prophetic pealing, and fair dreams beheld revealing,

Down the vista of my manhood, shapes of destiny sublime.

Then with many a dear one near me, friends and lovers fond to cheer me

And delight me with their presence, oh! how happy seemed the way!

Sunshine of unchanging weather, all things seemed combined together

To make life a scene of summer, overgrown with blooms of May.

Ah! the change the years have brought me, the harsh lessons they have taught me,

All the gloss of youth has vanished, all the mirth and glee

of yore;

And of friends and lovers cherished, some like early roses perished,

Died in youth, while others nourish a sad life on distant shore.

Yet to me one joy remaineth, pleasant even while it paineth, And I guard it like a treasured heirloom in its sacred shrine,

For the past seems ever present, shining like some silver crescent

Through the twilight shades of life, as long as memory still is mine.

And though sorrowful and lonely, there are shapes of beauty, only

Known to me, who come and whisper tender words that bring relief,

Words at which my heart rejoices, for they sound like echoed voices

Heard, long years ago, when I and boyhood took no thought of grief.

Sure my dwelling is enchanted and each chamber there is haunted,

And I see them spirit-guests, though others can behold them not,

See them clothed with angel-splendour, mark their glances calm and tender,

Clasp them by the hand again, and hold sweet interchange of thought.

Let the vain world call it folly, madness born of melancholy, Laugh to scorn my poet-fancies, deem my dear guests dreams of air!

Ah! sweet angels, how they wrong them! For I know I dwell among them,

All around me, hovering o'er me, I can see them ever near.

And howe'er the world upbraid me, it shall never unpersuade me

That the gentle friends of boyhood to my age again are given.

Coming, going and returning, in my heart still keeping burning.

The warm hope with them for ever, soon to live and love in Heaven.

1860.

IN THE MEADOWS.

Let us linger awhile in the meadows,
Ere the darkness of night comes down,
And the long and gathering shadows
Beckon us back to the town;

While still the gentle twilight
Breathes soft o'er the murmuring stream,
And wraps the fast-flowing river of thought
In a mystical haze of dream.

How oft in the evenings long gone by Have I trod these grassy ways, And talked with Nature face to face, Ere darkened these desolate days;

In the merry spring-time of my life,
When the soul was fresh and young,
Ere ever I knew the ways of the world,
Or my bosom with pain was wrung.

What founts of love and streams of song Rilled through my being then!
I had no fears for the coming years,
And no doubt of my fellow men.

No cloud o'er my sunny prospect came
To hide its golden gleams;
Oh, would that I could but wander again,
In that dear land of dreams!

But I cannot: the Present, grim and stern, Confronts me everywhere, And the fondly cherished fancies of youth, Are vanished like visions of air.

And I have learned, 'tis an evil world
That we live in, and false world too,
And those whom we trust our trust betray,
And none are wholly true;

And, oh! I'm weary of this wild strife
Of envy, hate and wrong;
And I scarce can sing, for the coldness that comes
And freezes the fount of song.

When I was young I could sing for glee, And pour my whole soul forth; Oh, happy the bards, who never grew old, In the morning of the earth!

Yet for me, 'tis sweet to leave the world And seek the haunts of my youth, And recal the dreams that I used to dream Of freedom, and gladness, and truth.

So, we'll linger awhile in the meadows,
Ere the darkness of night comes down,
And the long and gathering shadows
Beckon us back to the town.

1859.

REMONSTRANCE.

Oн, why art thou mournfully sighing For days that can come ne'er again? And why wilt thou torture thy spirit To harp on one anguishing strain? Why always, in sorrowful fancy, Recalling the forms of the dead, Disdaining the joys that around thee The Giver hath everywhere spread?

Ah! Why, like some muttering wizard, Employ the fine magic of Song, To bring from the graves where they slumber, Of spectres, a shadowy throng?

Why only indulge in the visions
That vainly look back on the years,
Which Death for his own long has numbered,
Through a dim folding curtain of tears?

Arouse thee, and live in the Present!

And sing of the things that remain
To gladden thee still on thy pathway,

And soothe the remembrance of pain.

Go, list to the voice of the brooklet!
Go, hearken the song of the bird!
As once, in the time of thy boyhood,
Ere ever thy sorrow was stirred.

Go, breathe the fine scent of the woodlands, Or drink in the fresh mountain breeze, And, pulsed with new ardour, thy spirit Shall shake off her clinging disease!

And then shall the friends who are with thee, Become to thy heart as endeared As the lost, and their love seem as wealthy As ever the old loves appeared.

Live! live! with the living, O Poet!

And linger no more with the dead!

The Future is calling thee onward,

And fresh paths are waiting thy tread.

Miscellaneous Pieces.

THE POET'S DREAM.

In the land of dream,
Where sunlit stream
Plashes and ripples through faëry glade,
Where dances light wave
In coral cave,
The Poet's enchanted bower is made.

He giveth no heed
To the care and greed
That stifle the spirit and heart of man,
Whose royal treasures
And dainty pleasures
Are upheaped in fanes empyrean.

In the care of Morn,
By Zephyr up-borne,
He scuds the waves of the viewless air,
Like a bird that upsprings
On lightsome wings,
And scatters sweet melodies every where.

Or he trills his song,
As he drives along
Reclined on the breast of a noonday cloud,
While the sprayey showers,
Like falling flowers,
Fling their fresh crystalline coolness abroad.

Till he gains the spot,
The hollow grot,
Where the gay little fairies with welcome await,
His brow to crown,
And to give him a throne
In a little faëry island state.

In every thing A native king,

He reigns supreme in his princely hall,
'Mong his courtiers laughs,
And revels and quaffs

Rich nectar at Faëry festival.

And all day long,
Wild measures of song,
And echoes of magic minstrelsy
Enchant the dell,
Where his sounding shell
Is high uphung on the beechen tree.

And he woos his loves
In the dim dream-groves,
Where the great oaks spread their branching screens,
And many a day
He whiles away
In flattery of his Faëry Queens.

But his wildest joy
Is when on high
Great Night her plumes in darkness dips,
Oh! deep are his blisses,
And dear as the kisses
That nestling lie on Urania's lips.

From star to star
He roams afar,
And feeds his spirit with visions sublime,
The fair ideals
That Night reveals,
Bright with the beauty of all Time.

Then do not deem
That the Poet's dream
In an inspiration vainly given.
From our Father above
It is missioned in love,—
Mid the sorrows of Earth, a glimmer of Heaven.

For midst the care
That shrouds this sphere
Of dearth, and darkness, and sorrow and sin,
The poet sings
Of happier things,
And lets a beam of beauty in.

1856.

THE REWARD OF GENIUS.

Not in the lap of Ease, at the bosom of Luxury nourished;

Not in the halls of Wealth, by the smiles of Fortune

caress'd;

But, hand in hand with Poverty, Genius ever hath flourished,

Tuning his buoyant song, with a weight of care at his breast.

Trained in Adversity's school, by harsh experience gaining

Power to probe to its depths the heart of human

kind;

Aye, by a rugged and difficult path his goal attaining,

Where the grim sepulchre holds his ashes in honour enshrined:

There, as in silence he lies, and of praise and blame unheeding,

Garlands are flung on his tombstone; eyes that are weeping swim

Brimming over with tears, and hearts at his story are bleeding:—

Truly a noble reward; but, what boots the rich guerdon to him?

1875.

MY MOTHERLAND.

My own dear Motherland, Famed island of the sea; Fain would I strike the harp and wake A tribute song to thee. Unworthy were the heart,
And dead to honest shame
And noble fame and false the lyre,
That throbbed not at thy name.

Through many a distant scene
My steps have wandered wide,
But in all regions thou hast been
My passion and my pride;
And when my day is done,
My life-star wanes on high,
I crave no other boon than this,—
'Neath English turf to lie.

Let other minstrels sing
Of realms beyond the wave,
I deem their glory light, they hold
The tyrant and the slave;
Their wonders may be rare,
Their beauty fair to see,
But, England dear! this heart of mine
Shall beat aye true to thee.

Let other minstrel lays
Tell of the rushing Rhine,
Her winding wave, her ruined shrines,
Her hills of corn and vine;
Let others sing of Alp,
And pine-clad Appenine;
But thine, dear land, shall be my song,
Even as my heart is thine.

Not thine, perchance, are scenes
Wild, picturesque and grand;
No boundless prairies stretch their length
Along my native land;
Above thy fertile fields
No fierce tornado sweeps,
Nor thine to hide amid the clouds,
Thy snow-crowned mountain steeps.

With Himalayan peaks,
Where tempests nurse their brood,
Skiddaw and Snowdon both compared,
Were little hillocks rude.

Nor thine from inland dells

To pour thy torrents wide;

No Mississippi rolls through thee

Her wild and endless tide.

Yet lovely are thy streams,
And dearer far to me
Thy Duddon rippling o'er the rocks,
And thy smooth silvery Lea;
I better love thy downs,
Thy dales and hermit woods,
Than all their grandest: forests dark,
Hoar summits, foaming floods.

My own dear native land,
Why do I love thee so;
And whence the power that gives thy name
To set my heart aglow;
My every pulse to stir,
My every thought to fan
To patriot flame, and make me proud
To be an Englishman?

Thou art the royal home
Of Virgin Liberty;
The slave sets foot upon thy shore,
And feels that he is free;
The exile turns to thee,
With tyrant wrongs opprest:
No caitiff crown'd can tear him from
This Ararat of rest.

Why do I love thee so?
Here Hampden fighting fell;
'Twas here that martyred Sydney died,
And Cromwell ruled so well.
Shades of the good and great,
They hover o'er thee still;
The glorious men of mailëd heart,
Stern soul, and iron will.

Why do I love thee so?
"Twas here that Shelley strung
His harp of deathless melody;
Here mighty Milton sung;

Here Wordsworth did unfold
The wealth of minstrel-mind;
And universal Shakespeare probed
The heart of human kind.

Why do I love thee so?
Oh! let thy homes of prayer,
Scattered all up and down the land,
The answer well declare;
Upon thine altar burns
Devotion's hallowed flame,
Religion, pure and undefiled,
Lends lustre to thy name.

Therefore I love thee well,
My own dear Motherland;
Freedom, and Song, and Piety,
Through thee walk hand in hand.
I love thee! More than this
No boon on earth I crave,—
To dwell 'mong honest English hearts,
And rest in English grave.

1859.

ITALY.

(FETTERED.)

I.

Can the soul of Freedom die? Awake and answer Italy!

Ah! she lieth wrapt in sleep,
Couched in dreams, nor doth she keep
Any thought of yesterday,
Nor what morrow-morning may
Call to life: she will not wake,
Unconscious of the deadly snake
That winds around her glowing limbs,
And holds her in his slimy twine,
Mingling with the breath divine,
His own foul essence, while the screams
Of vultures overhead forefend

The sleeper's doom, and wildly rend
The chambers of the startled air,
Above her, yet unheard, dread hymns
To the great king of Evil. And no prayer
Ascendeth to the doors of Heaven,
From any loving sister or fond brother,
In intercession for the early mother
Of life and liberty. It seems
As though all friendly love were driven
From kinsmen's thoughts. There let her lie,
In endless swoon, great Italy!

H.

Can the soul of Freedom die? Lie still! lie still! great Italy!

Come spirits born of death-bell knolls, Come vampires and midnight ghouls, And charnel spectres hither come, And bear the body to the tomb. Softly bear her, gently tread, Lest ye might wake the lovely dead. Was ever seen so fair a wreck? Fetch flowers the Mother's bier to deck. It is not meet to leave her thus Without some final offering, But do not bring The flowers of spring For fear of her awakening, Bring the waving cypress boughs, Bring the hemlock from the glade, And blossoms of the dull nightshade That scatter opiates from their breath, Bring all the dismal flowers of Death And twine for her a mourning wreath.

III.

Can the soul of Freedom die? Mourn, oh! mourn for Italy!

While the bell is sadly tolling, Sisters and brothers are condoling, Praying Heaven the dead to shrive The dead they prayed not for alive. So oft weep the crocodiles. Tears merrier by far than smiles. Now the vultures are caressed: The viper laid within the breast Is petted as he were her child; O happy grief, of love beguiled! O fickle kinsman and false lover. A mocking tear and grief is over! As a mourner follows after A rich man's bier with masked laughter, So false kinsmen weep for her, Who now lies in the sepulchre. Ay! we know the worth of grief, Treated like a midnight thief, It creeps by stealth into the brain. To be with scorn thrust out again.

IV.

Can the soul of Freedom die? Rise, burst thy tomb, dear Italy!

What of sisters false and brothers False? Ah! Falsehood only smothers For a little while the spark Of life and liberty. And hark The cry caught up from mouth to mouth! The glorious mother of the south Rises mighty from the tomb, And freedom reigns once more in Rome. "God and the People!" once again Is heard the old heroic strain. The mother's foot is on the viper's head, They laid her in the tomb, she was not dead, She cannot die: it was a swoon, Or but the passing shade of one. She throws away the crowning wreath, Twined of the sleepy flowers of Death; Her children bring of happier flowers, And twine another chaplet for her brow, And clothe her with the dignity Of Roman Liberty, More royal than a queen. And now, Behold her throned amid the stately towers!

They bow the knee, and hail her Mother of Freedom, keeper of the Portal; Nor shall again her children fail her, Nor Tyranny lay hold Upon the skirts of the Immortal.

Poet, scattering songs like dew, When shall thine azure dream come true?

1852.

ITALY.

(FREE.)

LAND of the South, whose storied fame Hath twined around thy hallowed name, For many a long recording year, A thousand deathless memories, dear To every heart that Freedom fires. To every soul that song inspires, To every breast that Art can warm With Music's strain or Painting's charm; Whoe'er thy beauty hath beheld, Or with thy bards communion held. Or tracked thy silver-winding streams, Or gazed upon the morning beams Cresting thy pine-clad Appenines, Or visited thy radiant shrines. And bared the pilgrim's reverent head In presence of thy mighty dead. Where'er the clime 'tis his to dwell He owns thy soul-subduing spell.

The years have vanished like a dream, And borne relentless down the stream, The eager-hurrying tide of Time, Youth's bounding joys and hopes sublime, Like flowers uprooted from their bed By the swift current's force, are fled; And many a change hath o'er me crept, And many a sorrow have I wept, And known the anguish all too deep For tears, the woe that cannot weep, The pang that almost chokes the breath,

Gazing on loved ones cold in Death, And often wished that I might fly, Like them, Earth's troubled scene and die; Since first from Splugen's snowy height Thy beauty hailed the wanderer's sight, And woke within him, at the view, Wonder that nigh to worship grew.

And still thy pictured glories glow On Memory's canvas even now. Nor lapse of years can e'er efface Of thy fair scenes one treasured trace. Of thy remembered loveliness, What sweet returning visions press Fast crowding in upon my mind; I leave this colder clime behind. On wings of Reverie borne away, And dream again my footsteps stray Among thy classic-haunted bowers, And underneath thy citied towers. Where'er they trod in days of yore. Again, by Como's wave-washed shore. I hear the laughing boatmen wake The echoes of the Larian lake. Again in Vallambrossa's glade I talk with Milton's honoured shade. While every wind that sweeps the pines Resounds with his majestic lines. Again, at Padua, I roam Beneath each quaint o'erarching dome. From venerable hall to hall And Livy's name and page recall; Or stand with awe, at midnight hour, Gazing on Ezzolino's tower, Till with the bard, I shuddering deem I see him writhing in the stream, And battling with the crimson flood, His jetty tresses drenched with blood. Again before my wondering eyes The moonlit stones of Venice rise, And gleaming through the hollow dark Stands out the tall tower of San Marc; In gondola that lightly fleets, I skim the eddying ocean streets, And pause awhile beneath the moon

To contemplate the broad lagoon. While at the prow, my gondolier His barcarole trills loud and clear. Again beside the silver sea, I see the port of Rimini, And ponder all that bards relate Of fair Francesca and her fate, The erring love, the murderous wrong, And how, as Dante tells in song, In dolorous region, far from Heaven, He saw their weeping spirits driven, (Her own and Paulo's shadowy form) Like doves affrayed before the storm, And heard upon the sobbing gale The murmur of her piteous tale. Again:—But wherefore should I name Each consecrated spot? Thy fame Immortal land! thy fair renown "A lustre lends but borrows none." And still shall live, from age to age, The charm of many a tuneful page. Long as the quickening eye shall glance O'er fabled scenes of old Romance, Long as the maiden's cheek shall pale At wild and legendary tale; While human hearts with passion glow Or human tears in pity flow, While minstrel-harps their notes prolong, Immortal in the Heaven of song, A quenchless star thy fame shall shine, Enshrined in sweeter lays than mine.

Nor less, though never lyre had rung
Thy praise, nor passionate poet flung
His offering on thy altar-shrine,
Would the heart's fondest wishes twine,
Like flowers, a coronal for thee
And thy returning liberty.
For where so cold and base is he,
Whose heart, unknown to sympathy,
Hath thrilled not at the tidings brought
Of all thy recent triumphs wrought,
Nor gladdened in the golden ray
Of thy young glory's rising day,
Nor felt within the kindling flame

Woke by thy Garibaldi's name? Not mine the callous heart accurst; My youth 'mid dreams of Freedom nurst. When wandering, in the days gone by, Beneath thy warm cerulean sky. 'Mong thy green vales and spreading woods And grand old mountain solitudes, And felt how, like a withering blight, Had fallen on all things fair and bright Oppression's vile and rankling breath, Woe to a nation worse than death, I grieved, still plaining as I went For thee the wailing wild lament, Yet, while I sorrowed, seemed to glean A hope that haunted still the scene, With inextinguishable beam. The spirit of thine ancient dream, Or ere 'twas thine to mourn the day That brought thy freedom's swift decay, Or fate had winged the rueful hour That chained thee to the Austrian's power.

Lovely in death, oh! lovelier far The light that, like the morning star, A diadem upon thy brow, Shines forth in living beauty now. Fairer than her whose favourite shrine Gay Cyprian girls were wont to twine With garlands from that mystic grove Sacred to dalliance and to love, The gueen who holds all hearts in fee, That morn when rising from the sea From each luxuriant golden tress, That curled beneath her hand's caress. She lightly shook the dripping wave, Art thou, new-risen from thy grave; The fetters riven thy limbs that bound, The cerements from thy form unwound, Again thou seemest all and more Than e'er thou wert of mightiest yore; Like a young bride with love made glad, Or vestal for a feast-day clad, By Freedom's sacred altar thou Hast now renewed thy solemn vow, And in thy glowing glance we read

The earnest of immortal deed, And in thy triumph deem we see All that we e'er conceived of thee, Though long enslaved and late redeemed, The Italy of which we dreamed!

1860.

THE PASSING OF AUTUMN.

Lo! where the pale yellow woodlands the sere leaves around us are strewing.

Reft of their beauty, the skeleton tree-tops wave lorn in

the wind;

Summer is gone, and the Autumn, the track of her footsteps pursuing,

Waves his adieu to the Winter, that comes up all grimly

behind.

Hushed is the music that filled the long days with its echoing gladness;

Leaving us, far o'er the waters, the sweet feathered minstrels have flown:

'Mong the deserted bowers the humid airs gather in sadness, While, to the senses, all Nature, once smiling, seems orphaned and lone.

Sadly the Sun, through his curtain of mist, a brief lustre discloses,

While, with disconsolate eye, he looks on the scene of decay;

Then to his couch he hastes, to forget, in the night's long reposes,

How all the splendour is vanished that erewhile rejoiced in his ray.

Sadly, with evening's dark shadows, the shuddering gale wanders moaning;

Sadly the chill rain weeps down heavy tears for the time that is fled:

Sadly my heart to the season responds, and, with mournful intoning,

Wails out a dirge for the dear-loved companions, who sleep with the dead.

How, like the bright days of summer long past, one by one they have left me

Who, with their presence, such sunshine beamed over the path of my soul;

Stealthily creeping, approaches Life's winter, and Death hath bereft me

Those whose warm love might have lessened grey Age's deep languor and dole.

Vanished the light of their smiles, and hushed the dear sound of their voices,

Like the November mists, heavy grief wraps my heart in its fold—

My heart a bower forsaken, that no more with the music rejoices

Of the blythe friendships that, nestling there, carolled and warbled of old.

Now it hears but the echo of mournful winds dismally wailing,

Voices that sob and sigh in response to the tears that I weep;

While I long for the lost, with wishes, alas, unavailing—
Wishes that fain would bid them come forth from the long
death-sleep.

Yet as the seasons passed, so Winter itself will be passing, Spring will return and the greenness and light to our eyes be given;

Hath Life's winter no spring, at the end of her grief's amassing?

Yea! for I, too, must soon sleep, and then wake to the young life of Heaven.

1870.

A SUMMER DAY'S RAMBLE.

On summer morn 'tis sweet to rise betimes, Refreshed by sleep from toil of yesterday, And, leaving far the smoke-dried town behind, To ramble in the fields and catch the glow, The earliest glow of the new risen sun, Diffusing glory over all the sky, And underlying Earth. To hear the birds From bush and brake a welcome warble forth, To greet the dawn, while the upsoaring lark, To vision lost on high, the spirit thrills With the clear music of his matin song. To drink the fragrant breeze that wanders on By garden, field, wildwood and flowery copse, Winged with soft odours of unnumbered blooms. To mark the stir of countless insect tribes That animate the atmosphere, re-waked And swarming forth to summer in the beam Of the warm sunshine. And to hark the sounds That from the farmstead peal, the cock's loud crow, The herd's dull lowing, and the herdboy's shouts, Blending together, like the measured notes Of some old song of magic-breathing tone, A choir of happy sounds, to Fancy's ear, By place and distance rendered musical.

On such a morn, desirous to forget
The griefs that weighed upon me, and enjoy
For one brief day a holiday, I left
My bed at dawn, and left my city-home,
And, passing through the long and silent streets,
The suburb gained at length, which past, at once
I entered on the green and open fields.

There was no wandering cloud to fleck the blue, That glistened fair as an Italian sky, Bending above me. Lightly in the breeze The poplars shook and rustled all their leaves. The dew-drops trembled on the waving grass, Sparkling like diamonds in the sunshine. Soft, Melodious, the mavis warbled out His love-chaunt in the hedge; and the shrill lark Hung in the morning sky a little speck Scarce visible. Chirrupped the grasshopper; And hummed the bee; and, borne on gorgeous sails, The bright and many-coloured butterfly Wantoned about the fields. A pleasant path Narrow and winding, girt on either hand With field-flowers, 'cross the meadows led my steps To join again the high road, by whose side One gentle rill with rippling cadence fell, And filled the air with murmurs, overhung

By brambles, with whose branches rude entwined The sweetbriar and the honeysuckle. Anon, The labouring team went by me, leading up The heavy wain along the ascending road.

Hence by the roadside path a pleasant mile I loitered on. Broad uplands on my left, Where waved the long green wheat, stretched far away Towards the western hills, with woodland crowned. And robed in purple haze, where one white spire Glistened amid the sunshine. On my right, Lay numerous villas couched in warm retreats. Embowered with greenery of sheltering trees, O'erlooking smooth-shaven lawns and gay parterres. Where many a rose and pink carnation shed Their fragrant incense on the breeze, and vied In beauty with each other. Here and there, I caught a distant glimpse of silver stream, Slow wandering on, with many a graceful curve Between its banks, and twinkling in the sun; While, floating on the morning atmosphere, Came to the ear the tones of village bells.

And now, a little green sequestered lane, With grateful shade, my footsteps did invite To tread its grass-grown ways. On either side Tall limes and chestnuts spread their branching screens. The dear delightful sense of solitude Entranced me like a dream, unbroken, save At intervals, by not unwelcome sound Of ploughman whistling to his team, or laugh Of merry milkmaids in the fields, or hum Of murmurous bees that wooed the bramble flowers, Or sharp bark of the sheep-dog; sounds that lend To silence deeper quiet, nor disturb The ear of meditation. Like to one, Long time the prey of sorrows, upon whom Sudden the sense of sweet oblivion falls. Or one, long toiling through the aching hours For scanty pittance, unto whom doth sleep Disclose delightful dream of distant scenes, Woodland and lake, meadow and mountain land, I felt, losing all memory of the town, So far behind me now, and, like a bee, From every object drinking beauty in.

At length beside the borders of a wood,
Low and o'erhanging many a silent pool,
Haunts of the newt and purple dragon-fly,
The lane meandered, leaving which it left
The shade. Now, near his proud meridian height,
The sun flung forth his broad and burning beam,
While languid drooped the flowers. Before me lay
A steep ascent; a double hawthorn hedge
Enclosed an upward path, that straightway led
On to the summit of a lofty hill.

That gained, lo! what a prospect met my view, Far as the eve could reach, a glorious scene That thrilled the heart with rapture and delight. High hills surmounting many a lovely vale, And lovely vales watered by pleasant streams, And streams that fed the meadows, where at will Wandered the herds, or couched 'neath spreading tree, Or cropped the fresh green herbage, or beside The river margin leaned to drink. Red roofs And curling wreaths of smoke, in many a dale, Betokened neighbourhood of village life; And just below me, peeping through the trees, The stately mansion of the lord of all These goodly acres; he, perchance, confined At home by gout, or asthma, or old age, While I, with youth and health, and vigour blest Range on at will, a truer lord than he, With him the shadow, me the substance lies.

While as I gazed upon the landscape, fixed
In silent meditation on the love
Of Him whose forming hand had made the Earth
So beautiful, adoring in my thought
Mine, Man's and Nature's God, my reverie
Was broken by the importunity
Of one that asked for alms; an aged man
That leaned upon a ragged staff, and turned
A supplicating eye on mine, an eye
That looked an old familiar with grief
And penury, the while his face and form
Seemed hunger-pinched. A little coin bestowed
Scarce missed, called forth his thanks, and one small tear
Bedewed his furrowed cheek. The beggar went
His gate, and left me pondering on the ways

Of man to man, the unequal laws that grind The poor, subjected to a life of toil, And at their labours' end, their sole reward, A pauper's funeral, and a pauper's grave.

Oh, what a Paradise this world might be, If man would walk obedient to the law Of his Creator! Ah! the primal sin Of our progenitor to bitter fruit Hath ripened, and the law of God no more Wakens concernment in the minds of men.—Away ungenial musings! that disturb The heavenly harmony that breathes around! The aged beggar-man hath left behind Unhappy legacy to Thought.

But now. As o'er the hill the breath of afternoon Steals languidly, and lazy murmurs creep Through the warm sunshine, like the surging voice Of far-off seas, the peaceful hamlet woos My footsteps the descending path to try. Small stir is in the village, and I turn All unobserved into the churchyard path. Lightly the ivy leaves round the old tower, Half lifted by the breeze, are rustling, And on the dial-plate the lengthening shade Betokens eve approaching. Here I pause, Among the graves, to note the resting place Of Memory's bard. Peace to the poet's dust! Almost the last of that great galaxy Of glorious names, whose recollections still Are warm within our hearts, the illustrious bards Of an age just departed. As I lift My hand to dash aside a falling tear, Of which I need not be ashamed, I think Of others who are sleeping far away, In other graves, and some in foreign land. The immortal Childe, the tempest of whose life Is over now, and hushed his turbulent heart, He sleeps beneath paternal Newstead's shade; And Adonais and Alastor lie United in their burial, side by side, Beneath the pyramid of Cestius, Beside the Eternal City; and he the first,

Best, greatest, wisest poet of his time, (Oh, might I dare to touch his garment's hem!) Wordsworth rests peacefully in Grasmere vale.

Beside the poet's grave I lingered out
The brief remaining hours of day, thence watched
The sun go down in glory, and the moon
Arise in splendour, by whose silver beam
Illumined, while the stars above me shone
Unnumbered as the sands beside the deep,
Lifting the soul to contemplate with awe
Her King, God and Creator, I recrossed
The hill, the lane retraced, refound the road,
Regained the city, and arrived once more
At home, like one whom an unwelcome sound
Awakens from a sleep of happy dreams.

1856.

POST EXSEQUIAS.

I.

DID they believe what I said, To day, when I buried their dead? Why then were their eyes with weeping red?

II.

Was there hope of a meeting again?
Or was it that Death had slain,—
Had slain!—had extinguished a soul,—that gave them
pain?

III.

Or was it alone a half-faith,
That they held in what Scripture saith?
A faith wrapt about with a doubt, like a ghastly wraith;

IV.

For the hollowed-out grave yawned too near,
And the flesh it received was too dear,
And the sense too acute for the spiritual hope to shine
clear.

V.

A month hence, the corse will be rotten,—
A year hence, the sorrow forgotten,—
Ah! what dream of the distant re-union will then be begotten!

VI.

Hush! Down Doubt! for could'st thou but see all,

This sense-life might show all unreal,
And the soul-life alone be the true life, the visioned ideal
With its songs hymeneal!

THE POET'S HOLIDAY.

AT MATLOCK, DERBYSHIRE.

Sweet it is on summer day, While, like children at their play, The young breezes here and there Wander up and down the air, Flinging odorous sweets around; While across the blue profound Not even one stray cloudlet floats: While the insects swarm like motes, In the beams benign shed down By the broad and radiant sun; While a thousand dancing rills Scatter spray among the hills, Browsed by the white and lowing herds. Filled with music by the birds, That amid the pine-trees tall Hold their choral festival; While, through vallies drowsed in dream, Murmurs on the cool green stream, Under wood, and cave, and bower, And beetling crag where weed and flower In the scant soil together grow, Watching the wave that winds below; While over all things seems to brood A something felt, not understood,

A soul-like sense, a magic power, The life, the spirit of the hour, And charms the heart with whispers deep, Whispers like those that when asleep Come to us in our dreams, but make No longer stay when we awake, Whispers with meanings audible, But such as words can never tell. Like angel-sounds by Echo riven From the rapt harmonies of Heaven; While Earth and Air and Heaven all seem To court repose in lap of dream; 'Tis sweet among the hills to lie And gaily sport with Reverie; To scape from Thought's more sober rule, In thoughts that will not brook control, But mingle, spurning curb and rein, Within the chambers of the brain, And to light measures leap and dance, Proud of their own luxuriance. Like bees that wanton 'mong the bowers, Sipping sweet honey from the flowers. From each and all collect their fill. And riot at their own sweet will.

Let despise who will despise The dear realm of reveries, They perchance have never known What it is to weep and groan, 'Neath the weight of anguish cast By Time's unrelenting blast, Like a cloud above the heart: They have never felt the smart Of perished hopes, of love decayed, Of dreams long buried 'neath the shade Of shrouding cold Reality; Let them laugh at reverie; Call it idle, call it folly; But for me, whom Melancholy Many a day hath won to grieve That hopes betray and friends deceive. A delightful thing it is To escape from memories Of the Past, to drive away Haunting sorrow for a day,

And to give unfettered range
To the Fancy amid strange
And untraversed fields to roam,
Fields where day-dreams bright make home,
Where Song's starry-visioned queen
Sceptres all the wide demesne,
Where no carking cares intrude
On the poet's solitude,
Where no semblance of annoyance
Comes to mar the sense of joyance,
Nor one envious gust of grief
Breaks upon love's high belief,
Nor one grim unwelcome doubt
Creeps in from the world without.

Life indeed is full of sorrow, And yet we from life may borrow Many a sweet ethereal gladness, Many a mirth unlinked with sadness; And amid the troubled sea There are isles of liberty, Isles of beauty, isles of light Safe from the wild waves' rude spite, Where in willow-shaded bay, We may anchor for a day Our poor battered barks, and gain Respite from the stormy main, There among the blooming bowers Let us while away the hours, Dreaming many a pleasant dream, Dreams that worldlings folly deem. What though brief the respite be, What though hard reality Will to-morrow drive away The dear dreamings of to-day, What though here for mortals lies No enduring Paradise, Still to-day, the blisses given By all-kind and gracious Heaven Let us cherish, nor forsake Sorrow's balm for sorrow's sake; If to-morrow we must grieve, Till to-morrow grief we'll leave, And among the hills be gay For one gleeful holiday.

Beauteous are the mountains round, With the lofty pine-woods crowned; Beautiful the vales below; Beautiful is Derwent's flow. Winding silently and slow Around giant crags, that lean To its waters calm and green; Beautiful the cottages Nested 'mong the cliffs and trees : All is beautiful and grand, Like some scene in Switzerland; And every sound that wins the ear Breathes a tone of joyance clear. Come then, Fancy! thou and I, Let us wander 'neath the sky, And free from every touch of pain, Scatter forth our wealth like rain; We will make on every hand To our minds a Fairy land, Peopling all the scene with being, Shapes that brook no mortal seeing, Genii of the streams and rills, Elf-sprites of the woods and hills. Fairer lovelier than of old, In the fabled Age of Gold, Played their pranks, as poets tell us. In the glorious groves of Hellas; We will call up all the fays To out-rival those old days: Oberon with his princely court To this region shall resort, A merry and melodious throng, While all the hollows ring with song.

Lo! what a burst of melody
Comes floating downward from the sky,
A very rill of sound!—oh, hark!
Can this be the matin lark?
Sure by no song of mortal bird
Are thus the depths of being stirred,
But 'tis the disembodied sprite
Of some song of high delight
Strayed from far-off realms of light,
And whispering to the wanderer here

Of brighter scenes in brighter sphere,
That lovelier land of deathless bliss,
Which Death's swift stream divides from this.
It seems to bear the soul away
To that realm of fadeless day,
On the light waves of its song;
Oh happy bird, thou doest me wrong!
To me thy liquid measures tell
Of raptures that, while here I dwell,
May ne'er be mine, joys only given
To the redeemed to taste in Heaven.

From the vale below a troop Of little peasant-lads, with whoop, And wild hilloa, and merry shout, Put the silence to the rout, And make the echoes ring again, As o'er the hills they climb and strain. Now, sweet Fancy! clothe me these In some gay Arcadian dress. Children these of ancient time, Sung in quaint and flowery rhyme, From some glorious region sent, With their careless merriment. By some kind benignant Power, To make glad the poet's hour: Could I dream 'twere thus indeed! But ah! my heart begins to bleed; For Memory comes back to me, Like some mariner o'er the sea Who finds welcome scant at home. Or like a spirit from the tomb Of long-buried years, and brings With her thoughts of Life's young springs, Early boyhood's matin dream, Ere the pure unsullied stream Mixed with darker waters, ere Passion, sorrow, pride or care Came to mar the heart of joy, Ere the man outgrew the boy, Ere I knew these years of pain; Would I were a child again!

But now the sun has reached his height, And all the Peak is swathed in light.

Come then, Fancy! some retreat. Sheltered from the noontide heat. Let us find in vonder wood. Some quiet nest of drowsihood, Where in leafy shade we'll lie. And watch remaining day go by; Till the calm of evening creep Over hollow, glen and steep, Telling that we at length must part From these scenes that charm the heart. And seek our distant home, but taking With us, of our merry-making, A remembrance ne'er to leave us. Whatever life may bring to grieve us. Ah! that such should be our fate. In this sublunary state, That our dearest pleasures may Make with us no lasting stay! And we look on what we prize, With but sad leave-taking eyes: Beauty, Love, Delight and Glory Are on Earth but transitory !--But should envious Time e'er leisure For another day of pleasure, Like to this, allow, I'll seek Then the mountains of the Peak. And with Reverie be gay, For another holiday.

1858.

A PAGE FROM THE BOOK OF HUMAN LIFE.

It was the holy Sabbath eventide,
And we were standing near the bridge. There came
A sound of rushing waters, where the river
Rolled down against the arches of the bridge;
The sweet half-moon was smiling in the sky
Through her thin twilight veil upon us, like
The Queen of Love and of love-spells herself;
A light spring wind swept by us, and ran down
To bathe amid the waters; and my heart
Fluttering within me even as that wind,
Beat high against my breast, and all my brain

Swelled with the thronging thoughts; and then and there, In accents faltering with the excess of feeling, I whispered unto thee of all my love.

O happy hour! Parent of sweet delight! Not yet two little weeks have intervened. But oh! what store of love hath been revealed To thee and me! What moments they have given Of blessedness; rapt moments! when the heart The trancëd heart hung, like a wave suspended Before the coming of the breeze, upon The magic utterance of a murmured thought. Yielding an immortality of Love. What golden promise showered of the years To come, the years that Love himself hath dowered -For thee and me, years that whate'er they bring Of joy or sadness, shall but crown affection. Unchanged affection, and unchangeable! Oh large delight, all lesser joys eclipsing! Oh Love, that overmeasures every sorrow!

Sorrow! wild word! that bears within its breath The unwritten history of my early days; O Sorrow, wherefore wilt thou now intrude, Recalling all the bitter tale of wrong, Wrong long forgiven, and well-nigh forgotten? Thou bring'st back recollections, that have now No answering echo in the breast of Love; Dim ghosts of buried years, that speak alone Of sighs breathed forth upon a barren waste, Large love bestowed upon a barren heart And vows that have been broken. Oh! not now Can Memory linger o'er the tearful page! For Hope hath kindled up a nobler love, And Love hath lighted on a costlier heart, Yea, Love hath grown to greater than before; In Emma's glance are all my griefs forgotten.

And thou too, dearest, thou hast had thy sorrows, And thy young morn of life hath been o'erclouded, Ay! even as mine own. But all the gloom Hath flown, as midnight flies the approach of Dawn, And the new-morning bursts upon our way. O give thy heart without reserve to Love!

Be Love the primate o'er the passing hours, The sovereign priest of all the coming years, Oh Emma! let us love and trust each other!

Yet, dearest, if in pensive mood perchance,
With eyesight cast far back upon the Past,
When heavier thought weighs down the brain, and twines
Too sadly round the heart, some flying shade,
Some sad remembrance of an ancient grief
Disturb the fountains of thy breast and send
The light tear trickling down, oh! I will soothe
Thy heart with love, and kiss the sorrow off
Thy cheek, and bring the light thought back again!
Ah dearest! for that we so love each other,
No lasting shade shall gather round our years.

The bark of Love with silver-shining sails, Outspread, and wafted by the favoring breeze, Glides gently down the stream with thee and me. Smooth are the smiling waters and therein Our shadows are reflected like a dream. To us the real and the ideal are one; We still press forward to the nobler life, Where Duty broadens, and the stream appears To swell in grander currents and roll down In deeper beauty mingling with the main.—So, let us voyage to the shores of Heaven!

VESPERS.

Softly the shades of Eve came floating down, O'er farm and field, hamlet and village spire, And, sweet embowered among the listening limes, The bird of night filled all the trancëd air With music; in the pauses of his song The distant curfew-chime a chorus pealed; As by the margin of that dear-loved stream, By which we oft have wandered forth delighting Our hearts with love, we rambled, earnestly Talking of happy days, past and to come, Gazing far forth upon the glorious sky Lit up with orange sunset in the West, While in the East the pale moon glimmered fair, And seemed to smile upon my love and me.

O happy hour! Source of deep ecstasy! That seemed to lift the liberated soul Beyond the reach of Earth and Earth's vain cares. Transported to a Paradise of Love, Where not one carking thought in evil guise Intruded on the heavenly harmony Of grand emotions, noble aspirations, Raptures ineffable, like shapes of life And light, that seemed to throng the atmosphere;— O holy, deep, dissolving harmony! If ever here on earth the human soul, Forgetful of the perishable clay, And lost in Him whose highest name is Love, Obtained a glimpse of those far worlds above, Where Bliss hath made an Everlasting home, Such glimpse of Heaven were mine at that fond hour, That blessed twilight hour beside the stream.

How smoothly hath the current of my days Glided along, with many a costly dream And fair imagination freighted, since, O thou, of women bravest! I have known thee. Ah peerless one! To me thy love hath been Surpassing worldly wealth and praise of men, And if, by high ambition fired, I yet Have toiled for fame and that bright laureate wreath That crowns the victor in the paths of Art, Stealing a brief while from thee, 'twas for thee And for thy sake, that round thy darling brow That wreath I might entwine, and hand thy name, And the fair memory of the unclouded love We bear each other, down the avenues Of the long Future; that in after years, When Earth shall have cast off the glittering toys That now she wears, and Men shall all be noble, And the Millenium dawn shall break in beauty, And Jesus for a thousand years on earth Shall reign, dear lovers like ourselves may read, How we twain lived and loved, and love the more.

My wife! In that one name the sum of all This world's delights lies clasped, like orient wealth Of gems within a casket. Oftentime, Whene'er the shafts of envy and the malice Of worldly men within this sensitive,

Too sensitive breast, have woke a pang of sorrow, For solace have I flown to thy embrace, And in the azure heaven of thy deep eyes Have gazed, and lost my every sense of grief, Soothed by thine affluent glances, richer far Than miser hoards, orbs where the light of love Shines ever with undying lustres fraught.

Blessed be God, who, unto me hath given So genial a companion! What, though Age Shall furrow that smooth brow, he cannot rob Therefrom the seal of high intelligence, And though he dim thine eves, he cannot dim The lustre of the love that havens there. We shall grow old together. Hand in hand, Should life be spared us, we will take our way Even as now, and our old hearts shall then. Even as our young hearts now, be one in love. And oh! when Death shall come, as come he will, Impartial Death that comes alike to all, His hand shall lightly fall on us; a friend, An angel sent from God, we will receive him. Revealer of a brighter Eden yet, Where we shall live and love for evermore, And dwell in glory in our Master's kingdom. 1855.

DISILLUSIONED.

So let it pass,
The beautiful dream that we visioned of Life!
Fading, alas!
Leaving us plunged in the thick of the bread-getting strife.

'Tis not the world,
Dearest, we looked for; it was but a mirage we saw:

Let it be hurled,
The Ideal from its pedestal shivered, for such is the law.

And in its stead,
See the grim-featured Reality fronting us now!
Image of dread,
Cut with a hard mocking sneer on its lip and a frown on its brow.

Where are the bowers,

Blooming with beauty, and ringing with echoes of song?

Where are the showers

Of sunlight seen, gleaming afar, as we wandered along?

Oh! we must think.

Some, sure, have found e'en as we fancied them thus; Some that may drink.

Brimful, joy's flagon of nectar; it was not for us.

'Twas not designed,

So it seems, that the hopes of our spring-time should ever bear fruit:

How shall I find.

Sounds for a song, in the broken strings of my lute?

Well! Perhaps 'tis best!

He who hath made us knows, well I ween, what He hath given:

Were earth our rest,

Should we look higher or no? Now there is Heaven! 1868.

MIRTH AND MINSTRELSY.

Wherefore should the poet's harp
Ever seek to borrow
Inspiration for his song
From the beldame, Sorrow?
Is it that to sorrow clings
Such attractive beauty,
That to worship at her shrine
Is to him a duty?

No! her cheeks are worn and wan
And her brow is wrinkled,
And with many a streak of grey
Are her thin locks sprinkled;
Harsh and grating is her speech,
Aye grim tidings telling;
Leave her to her crabbed self,
In her own dark dwelling.

Hie thee forth 'mong other scenes, Richer, fairer, brighter; And with music born of joy Make the world's heart lighter: We've enough of actual care And of real annoyance; Thine should be a merry strain, And a song of joyance.

Go, where Nature smileth drest
In her bright apparel,
Talk with her, and let her teach
Thee a lightsome carol,
One to charm awhile away
The dull sense of sadness,
And to gild the homes of men
With a ray of gladness.

Merrily the brooklets run
Down the purple mountains,
Merrily the spray is blown
From the sportive fountains,
Merrily the clustering flowers
On green banks are blooming,
Merrily the truant bees
'Mong the flowers are humming.

Gaily on the tall hill-sides
The young corn is springing,
Gaily in among the trees
The blithe birds are singing;
Full of merriment, the lark
Trills his music daily;
Even the passionate nightingale
Tunes her warble gaily.

Learn from these the merry lay
Nature aye rehearses,
Let the sad world happier be,
Poet, for thy verses!
Wherefore should the poet's harp
Ever seek to borrow
Inspiration for his song
From the beldame, Sorrow?

IGNOTUS.

And so you grow weary, my friend, tired out with the toil

And the fruitless endeavour;

And deem that your life is a failure, as daily some foil
Seems to meet you for ever.

For all your rich fancies and far-reaching thoughts on the shelf,

Are but destined to perish;

Lying useless, unknown and unread of all but yourself; Ah! then why should you cherish

The proud gift of song, whose results have but baffled and mocked

Your grand expectations?

For you thought to be famous, and pleasantly cradled and rocked

By a world's acclamations.

And so you grow weary, my friend! And yet the blythe bird In the tree tunes her carol,

Nor e'er gives a care, as I think, that her music be heard, Or with Fate seeks to quarrel.

She sings: 'tis her nature; and evermore wrapt in her song, She creates her own gladness;

While thou, querulous poet, for want of a listening throng, Art so shadowed with sadness.

To be gifted,—is that not enough? Why need there be fame?

Can it make thy verse sweeter?

Would thy musical lines flow on the less smoothly for blame?

Or praise make them completer?

And though never an eye on the pages of "Paradise Lost" Save Milton's had rested,

Had the marvellous aim of his soul by a failure been crost, Of its grandeur divested?

Still greatness is greatness albeit it weareth no wreath, And its glory none know it;

And thou,—so the true gift be thine,—'tis no Fame's idle breath,

It is God crowns thee Poet.

A SONG OF SUMMER.

Sweet perfumes on the gale,
That float up from the vale,

Laden with drowsy murmurs of the bees,

And blushing blooms of June,

That, in the rays of noon,

Wave your rich clusters to the lightsome breeze,

And brooklets rippling clear, Lend to my song an ear,

That "Welcome, welcome!" sings, for summer-tide is here.

Her twinkling footsteps pass, Fleet o'er the new-mown grass,

Through garden lawns and under forest-bowers;

And wheresoe'er she treads, The lavish Earth outspreads

A carpet, prankt with many-coloured flowers;

While all the air is stirred With songs of woodland bird,

Soon as her merry laugh among the groves is heard.

The music of her voice Makes all things to rejoice—

Hill, glade and glen, the fountains and the streams;

She, with her dimpling smiles, The enamoured sun beguiles

To answer with his brightest, warmest beams;

While, of her glances born, New tints the waving corn

Puts on as for a feast himself he would adorn.

And, as she wanders by, Pale youths look up and sigh,

And rosy blushes mount the maiden's cheek;

She leadeth by the hand

Young Cupid through the land,

And thus to tender lovers doth he speak:—

Now while the woods are gay And longest is the day,

Go, wed! for soon will come the Autumn, old and grey.

Now by the wimpling brook, The shepherd, o'er his crook, Pipes, deftly playing, on his oaten reed; Or, in the still sunshine, Doth languidly recline.

Where on the hills his nibbling flocks do feed;

While with half-open eye,

And basking lazily,

Stretched full length at his feet, his shaggy hound doth lie.

And now too, when at eve, The lingering hours do leave

Rich rainbow tints upon the unclouded sky,

Within the lime-tree dale, The little nightingale

Lifts up his liquid passionate notes on high,

With treble clear and strong His music doth prolong.

Enchanting the hushed air, all night, with magic song.

Among the downy leaves The busy gossamer weaves,

In the thick mulberry trees, his silken threads,

While as the twilight fades, And Night her deeper shades.

O'er all the landscape, like a curtain, spreads, Their lamps the glow-worms light To guide upon their flight,

Through the long grass, the forms of many a fairy sprite.

Lo, clad in silver sheen, Slow rises on the scene

The maiden moon with her attendant stars;

And in her pale white rays,

A myriad tiny fays

Do time their dances to the measured bars

Of music on the green, Where, underneath the treen,

King Oberon keeps his court with his light-hearted Queen.

And though the night wears on, Not yet their dance is done,

Nor will be till the crow of chanticleer,

Calls up the sun again; Then must the fairies, fain,

Stay their glad carnival and disappear,

Ere then 'tis meet our rhyme Should close with one more chime

Of "Welcome, welcome glad!" to the dear summer time.

UNCERTAINTY.

We are girt about with shadow;
Nothing here is sure;
Sunshine o'er the greenest meadow,
Passing clouds obscure;
Fairest night brings foulest morrow;
Joy is prelude oft to sorrow.

Falsehood dwells in fairest feature;
Lies are glossed with art;
Truth oft weareth roughest nature.
Who can read the heart?—
That we see, is only seeming;
That we do, we are but dreaming.

Life and Death are strangely mingled;—
Blossoms hide the grave:—
Each from each can scarce be singled,
They such likeness have;
Life to death is ever giving;
Dying seemeth truest living.

When the wind is sweetest blowing,
Plague is in its breath.
Wisest sages have no knowing
Of the lore of Death;
That great ken the deepest hidden,
Cometh to us oft unbidden.

Yet, are lights of Heaven blending
With the shades of Earth;
Death is evermore ascending
To the gates of Birth;
Faith can peer beneath the curtain;
The uncertain is made certain.

CLOUD-FISSURES.

Ŧ.

In the wail of wildest sorrow
Some softer tones are heard,
And with hopes of a joyous morrow
The saddest heart is stirred.

TT

Grief is not all unkindly, She comes to purify The being that too blindly Believes the present joy.

III.

And every shade of sadness
That darkens o'er the mind,
But heralds a purer gladness.—
No, Grief is not unkind!

IV.

All Nature with twofold seeming For evermore is rife, Now clouding and now beaming, And twofold phase hath Life.

V.

And throughout the wide creation,
All living things fulfil
The law of compensation,
That good may balance ill.

VI.

The graves are rich in blossoms, Spring lives in April-showers, And joys to mourning bosoms Bring the impartial hours.

VII.

Christ bore the cross of suffering
That we might be forgiven;
And the soul on Earth in trouble
May look through tears to Heaven.

THE HEXAMETER.

Homer and Virgil, all silent your tuneful hexameter slumbers; British bards, in despair, have discarded the rich swelling numbers;

Critics are curling their lips with contempt, because I have

named it;

Critical pens, "to our idiom," have, "wholly unsuited," proclaimed it;

Yet it may rival in English verse the old Greek for its sweet-

Only it wants the adornment of rhyme to give it completeness:

Then it flows along, like a stately and broadening river,

Gliding between its banks with a musical murmur for ever; Then the bard may employ it for each shade of thought and of feeling:

No verse so plastic as this, to embody his spirit's revealing; Be it a story of love, that lies hid in the maiden's fond bosom, Be it a song in praise of the breeze, or the bird, or the blossom.

Be it a sorrowful dirge, wailed over some dear one departed, Be it a loud lay of war, that is waged by the brave and freehearted.

Be it a holy hymn to the Guardian Power above us,

Be it a light-hearted ditty to those who delight in and love us.

Witness, who read these lines, of the noble "Hexameter" metre.

For the writer of English verse, no measure is grander or sweeter.

1870.

DEAD.

DEAD in her maiden prime! nipt in the flower of her beauty; See, where she lies pale and cold; O death, was this then thy duty?

Were there no stalks for thy sheaf; no branches

with sere hanging leaf;

Were there no lilies o'ergrown, and already beginning to languish,

That thou shouldst smite down our darling, and rend us with horror and anguish?

Never again shall we hear her laughter so silvery ringing, Never again will the beautiful lips wreathe with sunny smiles, flinging

O'er us a magic delight; quenched is our noonday

in night;

And as, beside the pale form, desolate watch we are keeping, She no more heeds how we grieve, asks us not, why we are weeping.

Ah! how we loved her; but love, though so strong, was too weak to retain her;

Could but love's garlands have bound her, oh! how had we chained our enchainer!

Dead! and the hopes that we cherished, like withered rose blooms are perished:

With a grim bridegroom, to far away lands, hath the spirit departed,

Borne hence upon his pale horse, and leaving us here broken-hearted.

1875.

· J. M.

Now the toil and strife are over,
Brave one, peaceful be thy slumber!
Never more can care encumber
Thy long patient, suffering breast;
Where, with daisies white, and clover,
And green turf the sod is drest,
Thou art lying safe at rest.

Never truant to thy duty,

Still her guerdon was but sorrow;
Each sad day brought sadder morrow;

Thine to bear the utmost test:

Now thy couch is decked with beauty;

Where no suffering can molest,

Thou art lying safe at rest.

Others trod the path of fortune,
Ne'er thy brow with envy shaded;
One by one, thy hopes evaded
Thine aspiring spirit's quest;
Thou didst chafe not, nor importune
God, but saidst "His will is best,"—
Now thou liest safe at rest.

Wert thou then all unregarded,
In thy patience and submission?
Must there be some strange omission
In Heaven's portionings, confest?
No! For art thou not rewarded?

More than any living blest

More than any living blest,
Lying happy, safe at rest.

O'er thee April's showers are weeping;
O'er thee, as the months are fleeting,
Each shall bring some gift for greeting;
And the sunset, in the West,
Every eve, where thou art sleeping,
Doth with golden beams invest,
As with glory, thy still rest.

So within the grave we leave thee,

Knowing that thy noble spirit

Doth a higher life inherit,

Than we can imagine best:

Thou art where no ill can grieve thee,

Naught disturb and naught molest,

Soul and body safe at rest!

1871.

THE RUIN.

The grey and mouldering walls bespeak
The desolation of the place;
Of all its lords not one remains,
The latest scion of his race.
Like a grim giant o'er the waste,
It frowns forsaken, wild and lone;
A wreck and ruin of the Past,
A spectre of the ages gone.

Where once the feudal banner streamed,
And proudly waved to every wind,
Dank weeds and creeping mosses grow
With trailing ivy intertwined;
No trace of field, or garden green,
Or summer bower these realms confess;
Remains alone, where these have been,
A bleak and howling wilderness.

For leagues around no dwelling near,
No human footprint marks the spot,
The beast neglects to covert here,
Alike of man and beast forgot;
And save alone to birds of prey,
Of life the region yields no breath;
It stands the dwelling of dismay,
Amid the solitude of Death.

The waters of a sluggish moat
The crumbling castle-keep surround,
Exhaling moist and fetid dews
That poison all the air around;
There noxious plants nod o'er the pool
And quiver to the deadly breeze,
That wings its pestilential flight
And sighs amid the naked trees.

In that deserted hall, no more

The stern grim feudal chieftain reigns;
No more above the oaken door,

Blush the virmillion blazoned panes;
No more, in chaste and curtained room,

Her dream of love the maiden weaves;
The place is silent as a tomb,

Save to the rustling ivy leaves.

But when the shuddering winds at night
Shriek out and day is gone to rest,
And with a strange unearthly light
The red moon glimmers through the mist,
The raven croaks her dismal song,
The screech owl wakes his wild reply,

And 'neath the hideous heaven a throng
Of ghastly shapes comes floating by.

Where once the stalwart portal frowned,
Through the dismantled arch they stream
And crowd the roofless hall; around
The rude unhallowed torches beam.
Up, from their charnel homes they come
To riot in this house of Woe;—
These are the dead, and this the tomb
Of the Old Time, long, long ago.

Again the festive lustres shine,
The spectre baron lifts on high
The golden goblet brimmed with wine;
The spectre guests make loud reply;
Their hollow laughter o'er the waste
Resounds with revel as before,
A dismal echo of the Past,
That lacks the life and glee of yore.

Alas! for Time can ne'er restore
These relics of a vanished year,
Life, Power, are flown for evermore,
And Death alone is monarch here.
Mere shadow of what once hath been
A pride and glory in the lands,
Now lone, amid the barren scene,
The grey and mouldering ruin stands.

1855.

MY CASTLE.

I нар a goodly castle reared,
That overlooked a wide demesne,
Where all things bright and fair appeared
To beautify the boundless scene;
Where rivers rolled their laughing waters
Through blooming meads of asphodel;
And where the merry dark-eyed daughters
Of that dear region loved me well.

Full often in my castle-halls
They trilled their silver melodies,
Where, pictured on the glowing walls,
All glorious shapes of rare device
Shone forth; and all the atmosphere
Was swathed in love and loveliness,
Nor any grief intruded there
To cross my dreams or mar my bliss.

"Twas in the days long, long ago,
Those happy days when I was young.
My castle is in ruins now,
Nor any tones of maiden song

Echo through the wide wilderness, That lies so desolate around; But only spirits in distress Give forth at times a wailing sound.

The fields are waste, and hateful weeds
Disfigure the neglected scene,
Where bloomed of old the shining meads,
And the dark river rolls between,
No more with merry laughing waters,
But wild and dismal sigh the waves,
And by the marge the land's dear daughters
Are cold and silent in their graves.

And now the beauty of the land
Is but as some old classic story,
Devised by visionary hand
To picture grief in hues of glory;
For in the days of passion tender
Those maidens drooped away and died,
And in the prime of summer's splendour
Fiend-foes came up on every side;

Came up and stormed my castle walls,
And overran my fair demesne,
Despoiled my princely pictured halls,
Nor left a trace of what had been;
But all is ghastly ruin now,
By Art of old so fair designed;—
The past is past,—and haggard Woe
Is monarch of the shattered mind.

1856.

DIRGE.

WINTER bloweth overhead,
All the land is drest in snow,
White and weird-like cerements spread
For the noble heart laid low.

Now the winter nights are on,
And the northern tempests rave;
And my heart is frozen stone,
Like the marble of thy grave.

Spring shall come with hip and haw, Sunny skies shall laugh apart; But no spring-tide sun can thaw The chill winter of my heart.

And the year shall flit away,
Leaving treasures at thy grave,
Mosses on the head-stone grey,
Daisies on the sod to wave.

I shall watch the Summer wane, Mark the last red Autumn tinge, In the Winter see again Branches decked with snowy fringe.

The chill winter of my breast,
With the seasons, knows no change;
Thou canst never leave thy rest,
Through the year with me to range.

Oft thy memory comes to me, Like a voice of other lands, Like a letter o'er the sea;— "Thou and I have shaken hands."

1853.

A SONG CONCERNING ERIN.

O DOWN-TRODDEN Erin, afflicted, opprest,
By the sons of thy sister, so haughty and proud,
O'er thine own, whom the milk of woe fed at thy breast,
The voice of thy wailing hath gone up aloud;

A cry, through black ages of injury and wrong,
Besieging the Mighty One's throne, like a prayer,—
"Thou Strength of the weak and the helpless, how long
Shall Thy righteousness tarry, Thy succour forbear?"

Throughout thy green islet, that lifts from the deep Her forehead so fair to be kissed by the morn, Lie springs frozen up in a winter-like sleep, With abundance to nourish each child thou hast borne. Ah! why are those fountains now barren and dry?
Why gush they not forth, yielding, free to thy hand,
The wealth which is thine? Let thy tyrants reply,
Whose yoke, like a curse, hath been laid on thy land.

What wonder, if hate of the Saxon hath burned In the breasts of thy children, beneath every star, As their hearts to the mother who bore them have yearned, Where'er they have wandered in exile afar?

Yet, oh mourning matron! thy weeping forego,

Cast the grief from thine heart, wipe the tear from thine

eye,

The light breaks at length through the night of thy woe, And the day of thy glad liberation draws nigh.

In the house of thy sister are those risen up,
Who have vowed, in the strength of their God, that thy
wrong

Shall be righted, and dashed into shivers the cup Of the vintage of tears thou hast tasted so long.

Ah! then what a noble revenge shall be thine,
As the gentlest of winds shall across the blue wave,
Waft the world over, telling, this message divine:

That wronged Erin, her wronger, unstinting forgave.
1891.

THREE BIRD-SONGS.

I HEARD a bird sing in the early morn,
Far up in the blue heaven, loud and clear;
And its jubilant music came downward borne,
Swathing my spirit's atmosphere—

"Thy heart is blest
In her heart's nest"—
Was the song which the lark sang to me, my dear!

Liquid and mellow, and deep and warm,
A warble I heard at noon in the grove,
For the song of the mavis came sweet as a charm
In the very bowers of luxury wove—

"Live thou thy life
With thine own true wife"—
Was the song which the thrush sang to me, my love

A passionate strain at eventime,
With, here and there, a throbbing wail,
The night-bird sang, as she sat in the lime,
To one who brooded alone in the vale—
"Green grasses wave

O'er thy true love's grave,
And thou art alone!" sang the nightingale.

A SUMMER MORNING.

AWAKE, arise! the dawn is glowing
With blushes, like a maiden;
Awake, arise! the breeze is blowing,
With softest perfumes laden;
Come forth, and wander in the meadows,
On this bright summer day,
For night, with all her brooding shadows,
Has flown away.

See, where the dews are gaily shining,
Like gems and jewels wealthy;
Oh! who would sit, with sorrow pining,
Enclosed in towns unhealthy?
While, high in Heaven, the lark is flinging
His music on the air,

And birds in every bush are singing, And feel no care.

Come, and behold the Maker's glory,
In forest, field, and fountain,
And where the pines, like bards grown hoary,
To winds that sweep the mountain,
Roll out their deep harmonious measure,
While clouds, that drift along,
Hang round them, for awhile with pleasure,
To hear their song.

Where, on the anthem of Creation,
No jarring sounds are breaking,
All voices with glad acclamation,
All tongues God's praises waking;
Thither, the busy world forgetting,
Come, let us steal away!
Adieu to care, and toil and fretting,
For one sweet day!

TO POESY.

T.

O Poesy! whate'er thou art-

A spirit from some higher clime, Sent down to Earth to glad the heart

Of man with visionings sublime; Or but a phantom of the mind, Alone in Fancy's dreams, enshrined. Born only of the Poet's brain, A name to grace his fabling strain; — Whate'er thou art, believed by me, O come, and lead me forth with thee, To roam the realms of reverie!

II.

Come! now that the returning Spring, Waking all lovely things of Earth To life, o'er my worn heart doth fling

A sudden ray of sunshine mirth,
And gives the languid pulse to glow
As with the warmth of long ago;
While founts of thought, neglected long,
With music of forgotten song,
Rill out afresh, and make me feel
Oblivious of Time's toothëd wheel,
And every furrow, every smart
Graven in its track upon my heart:
O Come! Divinest Poesy!
And let me wander forth with thee!

III.

Let us, together, taste once more
The freshness of those early days,
The bounding joys we shared of yore,

Ere thou and I had parted ways; Adown the paths we used to stray Lead me, if only for a day, With thee to groves where, all day long, The mavis pipes his mellow song, And blackbird, on the quivering spray, Carols his gleeful roundelay; And where, on starry summer eves, The little busy gossamer weaves His silken threads, all dewy wet, To catch the fairies in a net.

IV.

'Tis long, I know, since thou and I Together wandered, hand in hand, Since gazing on thee, eye to eye, Beneath thy glances, bright and bland. A light into my being stole, That seemed to thrill and warm the soul. As with the joy of Paradise, And bathed the earth and heaven in dyes Of sunrise, clothing all things here With beams, like those the angels wear. Those amber-tinted days have flown, And many a cloud of grief hath thrown Its shadow o'er my way, and I Have half-forgot my minstrelsy; But the sweet smiles of the young May Seem to bring back old days to-day. And buried youth, and make me long To warble out another song: Come then, and lead me forth with thee To roam the realms of Reverie!

1862.

MY MARY.

As through the green valley, when twilight was falling,
I wandered the meadows and dreaming of thee,
The birds to their mates from the bushes were calling,
To return home to roost in the sheltering tree.
I met thee, my Mary! a bonnie white kirtle
Of muslin encircled thy fairy-like form;
To thy boddice was pinned a gay sprig of fresh myrtle,
But oh! not more fresh than thy heart pure and warm.

Oh! happy that meeting, and fond was our greeting, And then we repaired to the stile by the grove, Nor marked we the hours all rapidly fleeting, Our hearts beating high with the music of love. Thy words like the breathings of Paradise stealing,
The glance of thine eye, and thy soft sighs gave birth
In my breast to a heart-warm elysium of feeling,
Nor mortal can taste of a heavenlier on earth.

To-night in the churchyard the breezes are sighing,
Among the tall elm trees that shelter thy grave,
Where cold to my love and devotion thou'rt lying,
More pale than the lilies that over thee wave.
The angels beheld thee, and loved thee, my Mary!
And bore thee away to their bowers of light.—
Would I could but lie down, for of life I am weary,
And sleep by thy side, in thy grave, dear, to-night.

GRIEF.

GRIEF, with thee full many a time Have I talked in musëd rhyme: And my life hath well nigh grown Tearful image of thine own. By thy presence shadowed o'er, Are the sunny dreams of yore: And yet deeper shadows crowd All the temple-space, and shroud Heart and soul and life and breath. In cold cerements sad as death. Thy pale form and furrowed brow Are made so familiar now, That I deem we two must hie Hand to hand in company, And ne'er part again until On the marge of Death-waves still, Terminates Life's weary way, Then, at length, ay! part we may! Yet 'twere idle to complain That our days are mixed with pain! What though tears like raindrops fall; 'Tis the common lot of all Here to bear the weight of ill, Drink the bitters that distil Oozing from the shrubs that grow All along our path below;

Not with weak and craven mind. Mourning every adverse wind, Shrinking from the storm and strife, Can we truly live our life. That will ne'er mate our desire. Yet the brave man will not tire, As his footsteps onward climb The steep pinnacles of time. Rolls in space this mighty sphere Not for our vain pastime here; Nor were sent the winged hours For our pleasaunce mong the flowers. Time to us deals out his measure For stern duty, not for pleasure; Just enough of light and hope To help us with the ill to cope; And though life with tears o'errun, So his duty be but done, The brave spirit rests secure, And feels 'tis noble to endure.

1860.

ARMIGER:

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND, GIFTED WITH
TWOFOLD GENIUS AS POET AND PAINTER.

T.

Summer is gone, and the last summer bird

Hath flown, like a scared hope, across the sea;
The woods are sere, and the thick branches, stirred
By Autumn's wailing winds, rave ceaselessly;
The leaves around are falling, not a tree
But stands disconsolate as though it mourned,
The splendours of its prime; and woe is me,
That mourning should be mine! I too have learned

To weep o'er vanished hopes, o'er joys that lie inurned.
II.

Oh Death, thou heedless spoiler! could thy hand
Light on no other prey, that thou shouldst tear
From love its crowning gem, and fix a brand
Of scathing, deep, remediless despair
On Friendship's open brow? Oh! couldst thou bear

So ill the vision of a joy like ours

In human hearts enshrined, that thou shouldst dare To crush of Art the inviolable flowers, And wake thy tuneless voice in Song's melodious bowers?

TII

Ah! never shall those bowers echo more
With the rapt music of the master's strain,
Nor ever shall the wood-nymph there outpour
Her crystal urn of gathered sweets again;
For he alike to pleasure and to pain
Is cold, who erst, dear Nature's darling strung
His silver lyre among us: Death hath ta'en
Our minstrel hence, and, oh! our hearts are wrung

To know the latest Minnesinger's song is sung.

IV

Come all ye Fair Creations of the Mind,
Genii and Elves and wingëd Dryads come,
And blend your tears with mine! oh leave behind
Your sports and gambols for the grave-yard gloom!
And as the chariot to its last long home

Bears the pale lifeless form of Armiger,

Take mourning garlands twined of many a bloom
Of doleful hue, and cast them on his bier,
And strew them all around the lonely sepulchre.

\mathbf{v} .

For oftentimes his hand your beauties limned.

And on the canvas gave your sports to view,
As often have his warbling measures timed
Your frolic dances on the green: he knew,
The secret lore of Elf-land, and with you
In realms of Faëry many a day hath been;
Come then, sweet sprites! and let your tears, like dew.

Drop gently for the dead, for he, I ween, Shall never woo you more to grace his song or scene.

VI.

Oh, weep with me! for my big tears must fall,
Lamenting Armiger the good and brave;
I cannot aught but wail, and wildly call
Upon the dead to answer from his grave;
In vain my tears, in vain response I crave;

For he will never speak again to me,
And I am doomed to linger Sorrow's slave,
Pent in this region of mortality,
And pace my prison round and languish to get free.

VII.

He came a regal soul, and dwelt awhile

Among us but not of us; everywhere

Bright buds of promise sprang to greet his smile,

And warm delights inhabited the air

Of life around him; all shapes good and fair,

All summer sounds, all wisdom and all truth,

Like stars, did circle him their central sphere;

Old age did pass him by for very ruth,

And while it snowed his locks renewed his spirit's youth.

VIII.

Whate'er on this cold earth can lend a grace
To human life, whate'er of grandeur shrined
In human story lies, whate'er can raise
One generous aspiration in the mind
Of man he loved and cherished: he could find
In common things things that by common eyes
Are undescried: no darkness, like a blind,
Hung o'er his Thought, that, kindred with the skies,
Did make for him this desert life a Paradise.

IX.

His spirit in an atmosphere of love
Did summer aye, and like a bee did glide
From bloom to bloom, where all sweet sorceries strove
For beatific mastery: like a bride
Queen Beauty ever waited at his side,
With lavish hand on him her gifts did shower,
Her secret loveliness she did not hide,
But stood disrobed before him in her bower,
Nor blushed to meet his gaze that merited the dower.

X.

For he was pure of heart; oh not the rill
That ripples musical adown the glade;
Not the new-fallen snow upon the hill,
Ere yet the flying fawn hath footprints made;
Oh! not the breast of virgin unaffrayed

More free from leprous guile, more free from stain Than our lost Armiger: a white-robed maid, A thronëd vestal in Art's matchless fane, His heavenly-visaged soul o'er all his thoughts did reign.

Nor aught obscene or hateful entrance found Within the charmed palace of his mind; Nor aught discordant broke upon the sound Of angel-harmonies that, flower-like, twined Around his inner-life: he did unbind His heart to all sweet influence, and there No room for harsher moods was left: the wind Of envious tongues swept by, nor lighted where No hidden cleft was found to lodge one ruffian care.

XII

In gazing on all beauty he had grown, Through long and deep communion, to be The image of the thing he gazed upon, Even as the skies are mirrored by the sea. But he is gone!—And I and Misery Walk hand in hand along the self-same way, Where Armiger was wont to roam with me, And ne'er will roam again; Ah, woe the day! When Earth claimed back her dust and gave the worm his prey.

XIII.

He was my Friend, and in that sacred name How many dear emotions lie interred, And quenched how many an ardent dream that came And visited this lorn heart, like a bird Of Paradise, or like a warm breath stirred By gusts of summer wind; nor ever Sorrow On our domain came with her cruel herd Of griefs; our joy was whole; no need to borrow For bliss a brighter sky, for love a lovelier morrow.

XIV.

Together 'twas our wont at break of day To climb the hills and drink the morning breeze; Or else by marge of wandering stream to stray And hark the merry bells across the leas Ring out their matin peal; at noon the trees

Of some old wood did lend a grateful shade,
Where we reclined, and fair philosophies
In graceful converse wooed, or idly made
Rhymes that nymph Echo told to every neighbouring glade.

XV.

Oh happy days, that ne'er will dawn again,
Save o'er the strange sad land of Memory!
Why are ye flown so early? Merry strain,
That woke the lyre of life to melody!
Why are thy gentle breathings hushed? Ah me!
I hear alone the shuddering night-winds rave.
All pilotless upon the stormy sea,
I drive before the unrelenting wave,
Now that my Armiger is lying in his grave.

XVI.

No more the loving pressure of his hand
Shall wake this heart to rapture; his warm smile
No more shall beam upon me bright and bland,
Like moonlight gladdening up some lonely isle;
No more his gentle converse shall beguile,
With charmed speech, this heavy-laden breast
To sweet oblivion of the world's rude toil:
In Death's dark vault, and in grim death-robe drest,
Who once was mine is now the charnel-spectre's guest.

XVII.

Upon that grave will Winter pile his snows,
And there will weep the tearful dews of Spring;
He will not waken from his long repose;
The ever-changing months to him can bring
No touch of feeling now: our memories cling
Like garlands round the dead, he heeds them not,
Cold to our torturing griefs, which cannot wring
From him the tribute of one tender thought:
O Death, in Love's dear realm what ravage thou hast
wrought!

XVIII.

For us the daily round of human things,

The fretful strife, the fever and the stir, As still Old Time sweeps by with hurrying wings, Must vex and must perplex; the ills we bear

The dead disturb not in his sepulchre,
The sepulchre quite shuts out sympathy;—

And can it be, that thou, dear Armiger, O'er human wrongs who ne'er witheldst a sigh,

Art severed from each link that bound us, thou and I?

XIX.

Ah no !—Ye fruitless sorrows, cease your flow,

Nor wail the imprisoned clay, the unbreathing clod!

'Tis not my Armiger that lieth low;

His deathless soul survives, and she hath trod The dust beneath her, winged the skyward road,

Outstripped the stars, and summered in the light That swathes the great metropolis of God;

And 'mong the ambrosial bowers of Heaven's delight, Her's is the dazzling day that knows no shadowing night.

XX.

'Tis not my Armiger that lieth low,

Then wherefore mourn for him? The rather mourn,

Poor creature of decay, that here below

Thou still must drink from life's funereal urn
The tearful draught of time: thy song must burn

A feeble, flickering and expiring flame;

A bird of passage, it must soon return

To the dim shades of Night from whence it came,

Awhile caressed, then spurned by the cold hand of Fame.

XXI.

On him hath dawned a glory that shall shine

Undimmed by Time or Change; for him the song,

The hymeneal song, in realms divine

The everlasting hosts of Heaven prolong; And while I weep he weeps no more; among

The blest, his spirit whispers unto me,

Above the storms of envy, strife and wrong, A breath of balm blown o'er the Jasper Sea,

"I wait to share with Love mine Immortality!"

1858.

A RAMBLE ON THE SEASHORE.

I.

The summer sun was setting red beneath the distant wave,
The trees and flowers looked flagged and drooped as
with excessive heat.

We wandered out upon the shore by cliff and crag and cave, And in the silence I could almost hear thy bosom beat.

II.

The wild thyme and the honeysuckle blossomed round our path,

I plucked a twig and gave thee of the flower thou

lov'dst so well,

The moon was shining fair above, the sea lay calm beneath, And the light waves plashed in many a little hollow and shingly dell.

III.

There was no sound to break the holy hush that round us lay,

Save the mystic measures of the waters plashing on

the beach,

And the last notes of the lark out-warbled to the dying day,
And breathing low the silver music of thy whispered
speech:

IV.

As in accents of deep tenderness thou answeredst to my love With words of love that charmed my heart and moved mine eyes to tears;

'Twas an hour of overwhelming bliss, and that bright moon

above,

Like a crescent of sweet promise seemed to me of after years.

V.

A promise sweet, not unfulfilled; for many a happy hour
As dear as that, my dearest wife, since then I've spent

dear as that, my dearest wife, since then I've spent with thee;

But still fond Memory brings to mind that ramble by the shore,

And thy whispered words of love on that fair evening by the sea.

ODE

THE DEPARTURE OF THE YEAR 1855.*

T.

Hush! tread ye softly round the monarch's bed, Nor break the twilight stillness of the place: Make smooth the pillow underneath his head.

And shade the light from falling on his face.

Calmly in his slumber lying,

Lo! how grand is his repose! Life is drawing to its close: The Old Year is dying.

TT

Glorious hath been the sunshine of his day, The mightiest of the monarchs of his line, He hath grown grey while kings have owned his sway. But, ah! his glories fade, his days decline!

> No longer can he give command Or take revenge upon his foes: For his sword of empire goes To grace another hand.

TIT

Amid the hottest carnage he hath stood,

Exulting in his strength; and far and wide Hath spread his conquering legions gorged with blood;

And Victory hath been with him like a bride:

'Mong the mountains of the South, He hath heard the trumpets blown, And the muffled thunders groan From the cannon's mouth.

IV

His face is bronzed and seamed with many scars; Come, gently bind the laurel round his brow!

The bearded victor in a hundred wars,

His day of victory is over now.

Ne'er more will he watch the breeze Wave his gonfalons in air, Or waft his mighty ships of war To plough the surging seas.

^{*} Written as a Companion-Ode to Mr. Frederick Tennyson's " Birth of the Year."

V.

Dear too hath been his measure of delight,

The mirth, the laughter and the festive glee;
He hath prolonged through many a jovial night

Mixed sounds of music and wild revelry;

Throned in state in bannered hall

He hath raised the cup in air,

Drank the praise of Love and War,

Then let the chalice fall.

VI.

And oftentimes hath he laid by his power

And owned the tenderer power of Woman's charms,
Hath drowsed and fallen asleep in Beauty's bower,
And bade adieu to care in Beauty's arms;
Known his sterner thought's eclipse,
In the light of Woman's eyes;
Doated on her smiles and sighs,
And hung upon her lips.

VII.

Alas! his sterner and his tenderer mind
Are closing both for ever to us all;
Midnight is near, the taper sinks, the wind
Shrieks like a mourner wailing round a pall.
Bring the shroud, bind up his head!
The pulse of life hath ceased to beat.
Let the new monarch mount his seat;
For the Old Year is dead.

ODE.

August, 1856.

'Tis now eight weary years ago, since first
From my life's morning firmament outbroke,
Like eager-winged lightening sudden burst
From thunder-cloud, the voice of Liberty; and woke,
Within this passionate heart of mine,
High hopes and noble aspirations
For that dear dawn divine,
That then seemed breaking through the night of nations.

Then loud uprose the poean, strong and bold,
From every shore upshouted by the free;
And tyrant-chains no more had power to hold,
In dungeon bound, the Spirit of swift Liberty;
And men proclaimed the rights of Man.
Alas! 'twas but the old sad story;
Bright dreams republican

That shone above the world with momentary glory.

France! Hungary! and Italia!
Immortal names inscribed on Freedom's page!
They rose the young republics of a day,
Then past like dreams, a wonderment for many an after age.

Like waves that but subside awhile

Then swift roll back their greedy waters,
Earth's kings unclasped the spoil,

Put to receive their hold by fell and bloody cloucht

But to regain their hold by fell and bloody slaughters.

And then across the salt sea-waves, afar,
Europe's brave exiles bore their breaking hearts,
Lamenting Liberty's extinguished star,
And chafing vainly at their tyrants' treacherous arts:
Vainly the Magyar, Kossuth, mourns
O'er Hungary's vanished glory;
Vainly her tribune yearns

Towards Rome, the parent nurse of Freedom's elder story.

Alas! as Greece, as Ancient Rome decayed,
Dim memories left us from the Eld of years,
We saw these later born republics fade
And marked their later heroes' martyr-tears;
The imperial tyrant tramples France
Beneath his heel; and Roman grandeur,
Hungarian valour, 'neath the glance
Of Austria, lie like Autumn leaves in withered splendour.

Yet Spain still lived; for Spain, like Spain of old,
Had warmed with passionate love of Liberty,
In these our days; and with the hour grown bold
Shook off with Titan hand the ancient tyranny.
But ah! to day, the news are borne
Across the loud lamenting ocean,
That traitor hand hath torn

From Frondom's heart the lest loved child of here.

From Freedom's heart the last loved child of her devotion.

Now all that mighty marvellous dream is o'er,
Our hopes of Freedom scattered to the wind,
And tyrants reign where tyrants reigned before,
And fettered is the free the true the godlike min.

And fettered is the free, the true, the godlike mind.

For Freedom's latest nursling slain, Loud be our bitter lamentations!

Ah! nevermore again,
Shall Liberty sit throned, a queen among the nations!

And yet, not so! What, though awhile our dreams, Our high imagined hopes delusive prove, Though overclouded be the morning beams,

The Freedom-loving God regards us from above! Ere long, His slumbering wrath shall break Above the thrones of kings, like thunder,

And Liberty re-wake,

New risen from the grave, a glory, light, and wonder. 1856.

ODE TO GENIUS.

Spirit that soarest heavenward, on rapt wings,
Winning wild music from Apollo's lyre;
And, from the scanty urn of common things,
Awakenest many a flame of high desire

To burn within the bosom of mankind, Transmuting by thy magic touch to gold

Whate er thy hands embrace! Weird Alchemist,

That, on the loftiest pinnacle of Mind,

Hast made thy sovran dwelling from of old,
Through all the Ages! O thou dimly guess'd
And strange enchanter of these regions dim,
Light of our mental night, to thee this tribute hymn!

Hail Genius, thou that sittest like a star
Ensphered amid the firmament of Time;
Thou Beauty robed in Night; though near, yet far
Away, illimitable and sublime.

Dear angel in our desolation given,

To walk with man this weary wilderness, And make the desert blossom like the rose; Yet still dost seem to scud thy native heaven,

Apparelled in no earth-enwoven dress;

Thine are no mortal joys, no mortal woes, And though thou dost unveil thy glorious brow, Thou still art strange amongst us! What art Thou? And whence the power to work thy wondrous will,
And make a garden of the desolate wild,
And the warm blooms to burst from winter chill,
And in the man's heart to rewake the child?
Oh, true life-giver and fine-dreamer, thou!
A word of thine, and a new world uprises,
And faëry forms to life and beauty start;
And gorgeous landscapes bright with splendour show;
And visioned wonders, fraught with strange surprises,
Henceforth immortal in the bowers of Art.

Henceforth immortal in the bowers of Art,
Are fashioned out by thine impulsive thought!
From what far realm unknown, by what wild witchery brought?

Thou hast thy favorites 'mong the sons of men, Capricious archimage! Oh! why on some Hast thou bestowed the high and gifted ken, While to the rest thou still remainest dumb, And thy bright book is as a volume sealed? Thou passest by the palaces of kings,

And seekest out the dwellings of the poor;
To lowly men thou hast thyself revealed;
In humble homestead fair illuminings,

Like gleams of light from some enchanted shore, Hast wakened; and the glory and the bliss To peasants, not to princes, given. O why is this?

Yea, thou dost love to seek the homes of sorrow,
And men whose portion here is grief and scorn;
And even I would deem I sometimes borrow
Thy glittering vestments, and that beams of Morn,
By the awake, amid my darkness shine;

By thee awoke, amid my darkness shine;— Oft in lush clover covert have I drowsed,

And dreamed of thee, and half forgot my woe; Have seemed to share thy bounteous breath divine, And heart to heart to be to thee espoused,

And far beyond the skirts of self to go;
Oh! am I thine? My very senses swim,
Dreaming that thou dear sprite art breathing in my hymn!
1856.

ODE TO MEMORY.

Hall to thee, aged seer, Whose voice in tones of melancholy, Comes stealing on mine ear, With a soft varying cadence deep and holy; Whispering of days long past,

When life was fresh, and this worn heart was young, And the fair soul, new wedded to the flesh.

Pealed forth a matin song.

Flown are those early years, and their sweet strain Is hushed, amid the tumult and the strife That jar upon the melody of life; Yet still, in fancy I live o'er again

That time, through thee, Bright Memory!

And dreams of other days come back to me.

The maiden of my early love,
So false and fair,
Smiling upon me from above,
1 see her there;

The yellow ringlets of her hair, Floating on the buoyant breeze;

Her smiles so full of hope or of despair, Ambiguous promises:

Her pouting lip, her graceful form, Her cheek's soft lily hue;

I clasp her by the hand again, And deem her true.

My boyhood's best-loved friend, Of the warm heart and cultured mind, Once more we stray

Along the green sequestered way, In genial converse kind;

Talking of poetry and fame,

And the great goal before us,

Dreaming that we would make us each a name,
Rejoicingly for us the future rang
With plaudits, and above us sang

The birds in happy chorus.

These and the old paternal home,

The cottage 'neath the tall elm tree,
Half in sunshine, half in gloom,

Come back to me In thy accents Memory.

Tears old friend are in thine eyes;

Ah! that Time should make us wise, Clouding o'er our early skies; Youth is brief, and morning flies; Sadness closes sweetest strain; And our brightest dreams are vain.

I gaze back on the Past,
It shone too fair and beautiful to last.
She I loved is now another's,
He I prized in years before,
With a friendship more than brother's,
Is a friend no more;
And I have found, the sad result of Time,
Ambition is a dangerous path to climb;
My eyes are with vain sorrows dim;

And wearily, wearily
Wander I now,
But sweet is the rose
On the thorny bough.

I love thee, ancient Memory!

Not every hope hath my desire evaded;

Life still is very dear to me,

Nor hath the beauty of the Past all faded;

With thee, Memory, hand in hand,

I roam, as through a classic land

That still retains a touch, a tone

Of glories flown.

1856.

ODE TO CONTEMPLATION.

I.

Hail, Contemplation! Hail!
Stern nymph that deign'st with me to dwell.
Whose birthplace is the mountain-height,
Beyond the reach of Death and Time,
Where gods abide in realms of light
And reign in bliss and sit sublime,
Enthroned above the petty strife
Of human tongues and human greed,
In wisdom live immortal lives
Made glorious by immortal deed.

II.

And yet not only there is thy abode ;-Not only on Olympian mount, Where they discourse in god-like mood, And track the theme of being to its fount;-But here with me in lowly vale Thou seekest out the woodland shade. The rustic seat in bosky dell With all the woodland flowers arrayed. And here on themes of human reach Taking thy sister, Memory, by the hand, Gaily dost thou enlarge in speech Borrowed from yon Olympian land; And songs of sorrow and of joy, So sweet their music that they seem But snatches of the songs of dream, Or echoes of thy life on high,

ш

Thou singest to adorn thy theme.

How thou dost doat upon the Past,
Consolidating all the sense
Of vanished days forgotten long
Into the music of thy song,
Like a new day in mould of memory cast,
And named by thee Experience.
Thou touchest the old thorns in Memory's bowers
And 'neath thy hand they blossom into flowers,
Glowing all o'er with rainbow hues,
Abounding in immortal use.
Oh let me sit beneath thy feet
And woo thee in thy lone retreat,
And learn of thee high truths that never fail!
Hail, Contemplation, hail!

1855.

THE BIRTHDAY THAT WE SPENT BESIDE THE SEA.

It was a bright and golden Autumn morn; There was no wandering cloud to fleck the blue And silent heaven that overhung the deep, Where many a stately ship at anchor lay; The Autumn wind sang loud, the ocean waves Crested with foam were plashing on the shore, When we walked forth upon the pebbled beach, On that sweet birthday spent beside the sea.

Far to the right, the wide green waters stretched On to the dim horizon's utmost verge; And on the marge the grasses dancing waved Like feathered plumes; the golden fennel flowers And purple nettle in the hollows shone Beneath the cliff; and here and there we caught A distant glimpse of cornfields blythe and boon, Among the northern hills; high up in heaven The bird of morn warbled a jubilant song, And softly, on the sympathetic ear, Pealed the glad music of the village bells, On that sweet birthday spent beside the sea.

A troop of laughing children on the sands,
With noise of shouting and of clapping hands,
Startled the lonely sea-birds from their nests,
That screaming flew and skimmed the crested waves;
No other sound was there of human life,
Save the clear music of thy whispered speech;
Nature and God had made a holiday
Of that sweet birthday spent beside the sea.

All touch of care was banished from my thought, That seemed to chime in happy unison
With all things round; the bitter sense of pain
And wrong and sorrow lay subdued and still
Within my breast, and wholly sanctified
The spirit in an atmosphere of love
Seemed swathed, in sacred harmony with God
And all besides; and sweet emotions thronged
Mine eager brain, woke by the tender glance,
Wingëd with love, from out thy mild blue eye,
That spoke most eloquently to my heart,
On that sweet birthday spent beside the sea.

For better than the radiance of the sun, And sweeter than the music of the winds, And deeper than the unfathomable main, And holier than the carol of the lark, That glance, those words responsive to mine own, That gave me fond assurance of thy love; For aye to tender Memory shall be dear, That birthday spent with thee beside the sea.

1856.

AN UNRHYMED LYRIC.

I.

O GARDEN of God!

Fair home of his creatures, Glowing with beauty, Radiant with splendour, Swathed in perfumes: How the Great Presence Fills thee with gladness! Lily and rose feel The touch of His Love;

> And lo! the flowers blossom, And the linnet sings all day, Then soft the twilight falls, And all the stars shine out.

> > II.

O Garden of God!

Winds shrieking through thee, Rain-floods descending, Fierce lightnings flashing, How art thou wasted, Defaced, desolated! Till the tempest's wild havoc And uproar subside;

And lo! the flowers blossom, And the linnet sings all day, Then soft the twilight falls, And all the stars shine out.

III.

O Garden of God!

What demons invade thee! All Hell broken loose, Bent on malice and mischief, To hurt and destroy; With sulphurous footsteps They trample the bowers, Spreading panic and terror, Then yanish away:—

> And lo! the flowers blossom, And the linnet sings all day, Then soft the twilight falls, And all the stars shine out.

IV.

O Garden of God!
Chill haunt of pale phantoms;
With features dejected,
And robed in sad garments
Of funeral hue,
They sweep down thine alleys,
Their tearful eyes weeping,
Their voices loud wailing,
Then melt in the air;
And lo! the flowers blossom,
And the linnet sings all day.

And the linnet sings all day, Then soft the twilight falls, And all the stars shine out.

V.

O Garden of God;
Stern Winter relentless,
Thy glory despoiling,
Strips off thy bright vesture,
Lays siege to thy life;
No bird carols to thee,
No gay bloom adorns thee;
So dreary and death-like!
But months flit away;
And lo! the flowers blossom,
And the linnet sings all day,

And lo! the flowers blossom, And the linnet sings all day, Then soft the twilight falls, And all the stars shine out.

POLAND.*

Τ.

Long-Buried Land! above whose grave,
With anguish of bereaved affection,

Freedom hath wept for her she could not save,

We hail thy resurrection! Awaking from thy death-like trance,

The unquenched light of yore beams in thy glance;

And pale with terror, That child of Error

Oppression, drowsed in dreams, uplifts her startled head;

She hears thine earthquake tread,

And the remembrance of thine olden story Returns upon her big with dread,

For unforgotten vet is Poland's hero-glory.

II.

Sarmatia lives! Vain, haughty Czar,

Thy hope to crush a living nation,

And, letting loose thy murderous hounds of War,

To hush the aspiration,

Of hearts that pant for Liberty,

Resolved to win or grandly, proudly die!

Burn, sack and pillage Each town and village;

Glut thy malignant hate Imperial Russ!

League with the dotard Pruss!

While Europe shudders at the tale of slaughter;

The soul that nerved her Thaddeus.

To Poland's latest strife, each patriot-son hath brought her!

III.

One Kosciusko, when thy hordes

Came swarming from their barbarous region,

Made conquest no light work to all their swords; Say, canst thou quell a legion

Of hearts like his proud Muscovie?

^{*}The hopes excited by the Polish rebellion of 1863, and expressed in this poem were doomed to disappointment. Langiewicz after a heroic struggle was finally vanquished by the Russians and took refuge in Galicia, and Polish nationality was extinguished for ever.

As well thy haughty lord might deem that he
The wild commotion

Of storm-tost ocean

Could lull to rest, or by his word the world Be back to Chaos to hurled.

As e'er to vanquish this wronged land's redressors, For Poland's flag shall ne'er be furled,

Until her sons have ridden her of the last of her oppressors!

IV.

There is a blot upon thy fame.

England, my country, dearly cherished!

False to thy mission, grievous was thy blame When Poland's high hopes perished;

Even as when at Stephen's death,

The holy martyr gasped his latest breath,

Saul was consenting; Be thy repenting

Fruitful as his, and make thy great voice heard,

And let the world be stirred With mighty sound of pealing protestations!

Redeem the Past, and speak the word
Of "Freedom to the Pole" echoing among the nations!

V.

Twice hath she bled; O God! not thrice

Be the same tragedy repeated!
By her fierce wrongs, her children's agonies,

To save, Thou art entreated!

Great King enthronëd in the sky,

Where Langiewicz, hath raised his standard high

His bands collecting, Be Thy protecting

All-powerful arm their bulwark and defence!
Sword of Omnipotence

Go with their armies forth to battle glorious, And sanctify the carnage, whence

Her heroes shall return shouting their hymns victorious!

March 14th, 1863.

TOIL.

There's work for all in this great world of ours,
There's work for me and you;
Else wherefore these divinely gifted powers?
We live that we may do.

Doing, a man asserts his right for living;
Life passeth like the cloud;
As the swift cloud gives showers, so be thou giving!
To give, thou wert endowed.

To give thy time, thy talents and thy labour
To serve the general good;
Each oweth unto each, neighbour to neighbour;
God made us of one blood.

He never meant his creature to dwell idle, Letting no seed-grain fall, Upon his hands and lips and brain a bridle, Enjoying, reaping all.

If thou wouldst reap the harvest, thou must scatter
The seed broadcast around;
To idle hand pertains the empty platter
And the unfruitful ground.

Toil is the very life and pulse of Nature,
The burden of her speech;
The fairest and the finest of her blossoms
Are ever out of reach:

To be obtained alone by patient labour;
Toil is the charter of our life;
The idler has no title to existence,
And sickens in the strife.

Oh! not in vain and vague and sinful dreaming
Is Life's high aim fulfilled;
The Earth is ready for thee, Light is beaming,
Go dig, and mine, and build.

And uproot and destroy, for it is needed,
The falsehood and the wrong;
And bravely, brother, let the field be weeded,
So shall the wheat rise strong.

Then up, and act, and do thy Maker's bidding, Nor thine own burden shurk; Nor longer let thy talents slumber hidden: But get to work!

1857.

REMEMBRANCE.

Can Recollection ever pall Upon the sense?—Oft I recall The bygone days, and vanished hours, Oft seem again to cull the flowers Of Life, and sip the honeyed joys Of Love, while ancient voice on voice Comes borne across the traversed sea, From the dim isles of Memory.

Remembrances of hope and gladness, Of Love's fond dreams, and Passion's madness, Are these the founts alone of sadness? The alembic of the Past transfuses All things to sweetness, sorrow loses Her bitter sting, and Pain her smart, Becoming joy's own counterpart.

Ay! Oft the vision of my days
Comes back to me. I tread the ways
That erst I trod. I read the sands
Of Life again, and turn with hands
Impatient o'er the book of Time,
And learn the Poesy sublime
Of childhood's pure simplicity,
Of youth's unshackled liberty;
Dear is the sorrow of the Past
For all the joy it overcast.

There is a pleasure rich and holy Gushing from fount of melancholy; And thoughts come bounding wild and strange,

Upon my brain,
As, once again,
I seem to range
Amid a wilderness of smiles,
To steer my bark 'mong charmëd isles,

'Neath cloudless skies and golden beams, On waves that lave the shore of dreams, Until I find a little cove, And anchor in the bay of Love.

Hark! Fancy whispers dreamily:—
"Come leave thy boat and walk with me.
How many shadows haunt these sands!
Mystic shapes from far off lands,
The genii of our smiles and tears,
Vanished hopes and banished fears,
The fairies born of grief and laughter,
They wing the breeze, come follow after,
And join with me the elfin band,
That dwell in mystic Wonderland.

Come; and, as we speed along,
We'll fill the air with many a song,
Gathered from quaint old canticles,
With echoes of sweet madrigals,
And snatches of bewitching tales;
Wakening up, in grot and hollow,
The music of divine Apollo,
While round our path the dancing waters glisten,
And all the dancing sprites stand charmed to listen.
Then leave thy boat, and walk with me
In the wild realm of Memory,
Wandering on, and on, and on,
To the dim waste of Oblivion.

August, 1852.

THE SOUL.

I.

ALL bodied shapes beneath the sun,
Men, nations, tribes and tongues are mortal;
They have their day,
Then die away,
Only the spirit is immortal.

II.

The finer essence that pervades,
And flows through all things, like a river,
While forms decay,
Pursues her way
And mingles with the Great "For Ever."

III.

The wise, the brave, the good must die,
The names of heroes and of sages
Grow dim with Time,
The soul sublime
Of deed and thought fills all the ages.

IV

In ever fresh and radiant robes
She clothes her being's blinding glory,
O'erleaps the bar,
And, like a star,
Orbs cycling with the round of story.

V.

Let form and system pass away,
And shroud and bury the dead mortal;
Mere sense of eye
'Tis well should die,
But the free spirit is immortal.

1857.

GONE AWAY.

The golden sunbeams glistened in the stream,

The golden wavelets danced around the prow,
I watched the bark that bore thee, like a dream

Fade on the view and in the distance grow

Dim and more dim; and then the sudden flow

Of feeling whelmed the soul, and idly blown

Across the fields of Time came, sweeping slow, The happy memories of the days agone, When thou wert with me; Ah, how sad to be alone!

For thou art gone away; and wild and strange

The thought of absence clingeth close in pain, And the smooth tide of life doth turn and change,

Rolled like a river upward from the main:
Dark shadows haunt the chambers of the brain,

Wild dreams intrude upon my lonely rest,

For thou art gone away; Come back again, Oh child of light! and shelter in my breast; Come back to love and me, thou brightest and thou best! Last night I thought I saw thee in my sleep,

Thine eye drooped languid with the touch of Woe,

Thy cheek was prest to mine and thou didst weep,

I heard thee speak, "No, no, thou must not go! "A little longer linger here below:

A little longer linger, live and love;

A little longer dally with the foe;

Oh stay! suspend awhile thy flight above; And shelter still thine own, thy bosom's nestling dove!"

'Twas but a dream, for thou art far away.

Oh, would that I were there, or thou wert here!

That I might dote upon thine eyes, or play

With thy luxuriant hair, and feel thee near: Oh! that I might embrace thee, and the dear

Impetuous love pour out in eager kiss

Upon thy lips! Vain hope, that doth appear

Too like a mockery of the void that is!

Come back, come back again, and crown the cup of bliss!

MOUNTAIN SUNSHINE.

Sweet song to sorrow give no more
Thy gentle fancies; let thy lay
Inspire its ancient life, and play
With joy, as in the days before

A touch of scorn thy love confused,
And drave him back within thy heart,
There with closed doors to dwell apart,
And sicken of his trust abused!

For now the sorrowing shadow drops
His brooding wings and fades away,
Fades melted by the morning ray,
Like mist that sweeps the mountain tops.

Oh clasp again thy joy, sweet lay!

And hymn thy love, while over all,

The sunlight spreads his golden pall,
And paves with beams the path of Day.

The happy shroud infolding Woe,
Woe that too long usurped the breast
Of Love's dominion; let her rest,
And dig the grave, and lay her low!

To Love belongs the all-golden time.

Wild Love, that in his earliest youth
Seemed traitor wearing mask of truth,
But now, grown up to sober prime,

A child no longer flinging dust

Before the winds to blind his eyes,

But made through sad Experience wise,

Hath learnt the truth that lies in trust.

So overspread the farthest view,
Bright sun! and shine on all around;
Light up the prospect without bound,
And gladden all the unclouded blue!

1852.

THE COLLOQUY OF LIFE AND DEATH.

I.

In the home of Misery,— Want and Sin were standing by,— Life and Death held colloquy.

II.

And they talked of diverse themes,
Filled the time with various matter;
Mute and listening to their chatter,
Misery sat, like one who dreams,
And Death snapt his fingers at her.

III.

Vexed was she by little doubt,
Deeming neither much a friend,
Careless what should be the end
Of the questions in dispute,
So some end were brought about.

IV.

Want and sin were standing by;
Want full-staring in her face;
Sin beside her whispering
In her ear persuasively,
With a seeming air of grace,
Many a dark deceitful thing.

V

And while Life and Death talked on,
Want and Sin the strife encouraged;
Want on side of Death engaged,
And Life had the other one.

VI.

And they talked of Misery,
Which could prove the greater friend,
Who the most on Love attend,
But they talked most bitterly,
So that no one could discover
Wherein either one did love her.

VII.

Death began the theme of strife:—
There is comfort in the grave.
Rest in peace, O weary wave,
After all the storms of life!
Hither is the sufferer borne,
I can comfort all who mourn.

VIII.

Where the worth of earthly pleasure?

Mirth for aye begetteth sorrow;

Life may lead the wanton measure,

But to me belongs the morrow;

When I lift my hand to strike,

Mirth and Woe are both alike.

IX.

Life may sing the songs of time,
Ending with the ending hours;
Bowl and revel, masque and mime,—
Ay! Dance forward to the tomb!
O night-wearied! homeward come,
Sleep in quiet 'neath the flowers;
Slumber-sealed in quiet lie,
And rot into Eternity.

X.

See this pale and haggard thing,
Her whom men call Misery!
Long enough Life's underling;
Ah! that she might sleep with me,
And released from Life and Sin,
Her first hour of joy begin!'

XI.

Life broke in,—" What joy in thee,
Monarch of the fleshless skull?
Say that Pain hath rather glee
When the nobler senses dull.
Wonder-fashioned bone on bone,
Time-decaying one by one;
Ah, the utter misery!
Thine the only jubilee.

XII.

Tell the secrets of thy home,
Say, deceiver, is there quiet
When the ghouls and vampires come
'Mong dead carcases to riot?
Happy ravage charnel-fed!
All the while what dream the dead?

XII.

Sweet is Death to those who weep,

None to hate and none to love them,

Couched in arms of endless sleep,

While the grasses wave above them,

While the grasses wave above them, O'er the slumberer dreams are stealing, And the Dead know Death's own feeling.

XIV.

Oh! to feel and all alone;
Sympathy, however rude,
Banished from that solitude;
Untold horror and unknown!
Woe shrieks up the hollow chasm;
On the brink the violets blossom.

XV.

Life may play a losing game, Love betray and pleasure cloy; Better sorrow, if the name Of Death be synonyme of joy;

Anarch, who clasps hands with thee Mocketh his own misery.

XVI.

Death replied,—And if to live
Be so sweet to Misery,
Why doth she so seldom give
Ear to thy philosophy?
Why so oft, outliving faith,
Seek to leap the gulphs of Death?

XVII.

Leave the carcase to the worms,
Death unbars the gates of Time,
And beyond a sea of storms
Sits the soul and reigns sublime,
There, from sin and sorrow free,
High-throned in tranquility.

XVIII.

Or she scales the bounds of light, Infant wisdom wombëd warm; Kens the intenser ray, with sight Undeterred by physic form; Walks in being undismayed, And so leaps from grade to grade.

XIX.

"All the while what dream the dead?"
Now but on the rising ground,
How the light gleams overhead
And the rays spread all around;
Angel-wings are plumed with fire,
Mounting on the strong desire.

XX.

Who shall scale the topmost height?
Planets wheeling towards their sun.
Who shall stay the unending flight?
Hath it even yet begun?
God still watcheth overhead.—
Dost thou ask what dream the dead?

XXI.

To whom Life,—Fallacious dream!
But a dream! Mortality
Round her rotting carcase throws
The luminous mist, and falsely glows
Life-splendour; so might Death beseem
Life changed to Immortality.
Revel in thy bright ideal,
But for me the brighter real!

XXII

What though in this world of change
Life at intervals may falter,
Havoc can but idly range,
A God with no abiding altar,
Hither thither; only mine
Is the everlasting shrine.

XXIII.

Thine the prey but mine the reign;
All things moulder at thy touch;
Systems, Empires on the wane,
The great anarch conquers such;
But methinks that all their glory
Cometh of the living story.

XXIV.

Thine the prey but mine the feast;
Be the charnel table spread,
Let Death revel like a beast
Upon festering hand and head;
But the festal song is o'er,
The blood-wine was drained before.

XXV.

Hath the song a touch of woe?

Then prolong the mournful measure;
When grief can no further go,
Grief itself is other pleasure;

Who take grief to habit with them Know the sweetness of the rhythm.

XXVI.

Life the labourer buildeth high
Palace, tower and temple-fane,
Even the tomb her workmanship.

Many a freighted argosy

Sends she o'er the mighty main;
While, with hand upon his hip,
Death indulges jeer and jest,
Knowing whose shall be the rest.

XXVII.

Mark the peopled city reach
Hands of commerce to the sea!
Dost thou count some faces bleach
'Neath the hand of poverty?
Poverty but lives by stealth,
Taking mimic guise of wealth.

XXVIII.

Mid the moving politics
Plenty grows and wants decrease.
Who can in a moment fix
The broad pedestal of ease?
Time the game from Heaven hath won,
And slow Progress laboureth on.

XXIX.

Truth from failure gathers strength,
And all men shall equal be,
When the human mind at length,
In the light of knowledge free,
Flings all dogmas to the wind,
All the edicts of the schools,
Soars superior to all rules
Save the rule of Human-kind,
Priest and Prince o'erthrown and Man
Crowned the great Republican.—

XXX.

"Mine the dream Immortal," then
Death replied,—"but Mortal thine
This of the great Citizen
Man uplift to the Divine,
This the dream of all the ages,
Mocker of the wisest sages.

XXXI.

Doth slow Progress labour on?

Ask it of the Memphian Sphynx!

Of the glory Egypt won,

Who shall all the scattered links Gather up? Is grandeur gained? There a greater grandeur waned.

XXXII.

Not till Isis come again
Shall Osirian might be seen,
Not till then the puny brain

Grow to what it once hath been, Be the fruit in reach, and then, Luscious feast for Death again.

XXXIII.

Where is wealth there robbers lurk; Who the thief? and whither went

All the enginry at work

To rear Pharoah's monument? Whose the skilful head and hand? Or were there giants in the land?

XXXIV.

Hath then Misery rest with Time?

Doth she grow a fairer jade?

How a little pungent rhyme

Proves Life all a retrograde!

Down the spheres of Life men fall, In Death they rise if rise at all.

XXXV.

The great Empires that are gone Save from Life's romantic tale, Was their glory real? or won But for after-manhood's bale? All the sins to Glory wed, For the sinners they are dead?

XXXVI.

"That great liar History"
Dips her pencil in soft hues

Of poetic mystery,

And a golden splendour throws Round the guilty Past. I'faith The truest glory comes of Death.

XXXVII.

Through the ages Life is one,
Pre-ordainëd child of Doom;
Life in ages that are gone
Is the Life of years to come;
And the years roll, one by one,
Down the deep oblivion.

XXXVIII.

One farce acted o'er again,
And, within the motley rout,
Do the little broods of men
Play their antic motions out,
Acting, acting evermore,
The tragic farce of rich and poor.

XXXIX.

And the world is moved by lies,
For the diplomatic art
In politics, and penny-wise
Emotion in the truckling mart,
Promotion in the church, the school,
The army,—Man lives by such rule.

XL.

Thou and I, while Earth is rolled
Along, true sister and true brother,
Will our ceaseless revels hold,
And will compensate each other,
For whatever loss may be
At the expense of Misery.

XLI.

So they ceased their colloquy.—
Want and Sin are sitting still
In the home of Misery,
Prompting her almost at will;
But she deems a day must come,
When she will rent another home.

XLII.

Life and Death are watching by
Each other's revels, day by day;
But their poor philosophy
Is bounded by a frame of clay;
Religion higher truths can teach
Then any in their logic reach,
And to the Christian Soul is given,
Illumined with the Light from Heaven,
A ken that, 'mid all mysteries,
Fills her with Faith's own perfect Peace.

1854.

STANZAS.

"Love not!"—There was a magic in the voice, I cared not for the words; 'twas that alone Suffused the soul with re-awakened joys, Joys that sick sorrow deemed for ever flown.

Sure such a voice is Heaven's and not of Earth,
The tone how far the bitter words above!
For they might blight the blossom in the birth,
Thy voice belied them whispering tenderest love.

Oh! like a dream that soothes the ruffled spirit,
Born of the slumbrous shadows of the Night,
Thy music came; the heart was hushed to hear it,
And trembled with a new and vague delight!

As when, through twilight o'er the waters stealing,
The pure pale crescent moonbeam faintly glistens,
And from the distance comes the curfew's pealing,
The boatman rests upon his oars and listens;

So on thy music did I hang love-charmed,
Love born within me, like a rising day,
Nor grief dared whisper, for the sounds that warmed
Waved the unuttered thoughts of Woe away.

And fickle Fancy framed a wild weird lay,
Of love that scorned the withered ghost of sorrow,
And deemed the flickering beam the fuller day
And that her night of grief had found a morrow.

And is it so? Ah foolish exultation!
Why to so happy a shrine thine offering bring?
Yoke not another to thy desolation,
This heart is but a wounded, broken thing!

Bury this new delight in the open grave, Of Old affection! Rest in thine undoing, No more to Love but kinder Grief a slave! Hope may not dwell in this deserted ruin.

But still that voice, whose music woke delight
That overcame awhile my deep dejection,
In memory's hold, shall, like a quenchless light,
Live on, and soothe my saddest recollection!

1853.

THE IDEAL.

WE live within an evil world. Where tyrants rule and men dissemble; And Truth is but a gem impearled In the dark ocean; and slaves tremble At their own shadows, and fall sick Beneath the weary weight of wrong; And Love in sorrow hath grown weak, And wickedness alone is strong; And, day by day, this heart of woe Is doomed to drag a heavier load; And the worn world rocks to and fro; And the clouds hide the face of God. Yet not alone of sighs and tears Prolific are the passing hours, But Life a sweeter image bears, And Joys come thronging with the years To bless us, even as the flowers Spring up amid the lornest wild. And Man of Sorrow is beguiled.

Ah! Though the tide of Time flows fast,
And rolls into the gulph of Death;
And though the sky is overcast,
And the gloom shadows all beneath;
We know we were not made in vain,
Or but to pine a little while,

To groan with toil of hand and brain,
And pass away without a smile;
But oft we mark a distant gleam
That gladdens up the length day

That gladdens up the lonely day, And then we soar on wings of dream, And take the wind and float away,

Like fairy barks, o'er magic seas,

To happy haven onward driven; And then the spirit finds release From all Life's grim realities;— Immortal moments, such as these,

Are prophecies of Heaven.
Oh! Let whatever will betide;
For God is good, and space is wide!

1854.

CHERISHED SCENES.

How sweet to walk at Eventime,
Amid the gathering shades,
And listen while the curfew's chime
Comes softened o'er the meads;
The flowers with fragrance fill the air,
The breeze floats blythe and free,
And murmuring on, by farm and copse,
Glides down the silver Lea.

Full oft, in boyhood's careless hours,
On Summer afternoon,
I've rambled forth to pluck the flowers
With playmates on the down;
Or else, upon the winding stream,
Have shouted wild with glee,
As lightly danced our boat along
The waters of the Lea.

Nor less these scenes their influence lent
To Youth's bewitching dream,
How often, then, my steps were bent
To seek the favorite stream,
With her I loved, at eve, while sang
The night-bird in the tree,
And there our vows of love we told,
In hearing of the Lea.

And still at summer eve we rove
Through this familiar scene,
As once we roved, and tell our love,
Our love unchanged as then;
An angel sure in woman form
Hath dwelt and walked with me,
Since first at eve we strolled beside
The margin of the Lea.

Oh! when at length the dear life given,
Our Father shall demand,
And Death shall lead our spirits forth
To join the angel-band;
Then let our forms together laid
In village churchyard be,
In some sweet, sheltered, summer nook,
Beside the silver Lea.

1855.

TO THE RIVER LEA.

How sweet when the shadows of Eve are descending,
And light falls the dew on the slumbering grass,
When the breezes are hushed, and the branches are bending,
And the waters a lullaby breathe as they pass,
To roam by the marge of the soft-flowing river,
And hear the lorn nightingale sing in the tree,
And dream, as thy smooth current floweth, for ever
Hath flown that calm current on, sweet silver Lea!

O dearly loved river! thy waters inherit
The calm of the ages that o'er thee have rolled,
And, gazing on thee, how often my spirit
Hath thrilled with a pleasure and passion untold!
And oftimes, when torn with the tempest of sorrow,
Thy voice hath possessed a strange magic for me,
And, refining my grief, given strength, for the morrow
And thy own resignation, O sweet silver Lea!

Let others, ambitious, proclaim the loud glory
Of rivers that roll in wild regions afar,
Where the Genius of Song and the Spirit of Story
Have witnessed the prowess of Love and of War;
Where heroes have conquered and armies have perished,
Whose waters have blushed with the blood of the free;
My spirit a happier idol hath cherished,
And thine be my homage, O sweet silver Lea!

Nor yet all unknown to such scenes are thy waters,*
Nor yet all unskilled in the secret of war;
Thou, too, art renowned as a river of slaughters:—
When of old the rude Northmen came swarming from far,
Their defeat and dismay were thy triumph and glory;
Oh! ever remembered thy service shall be,
While Alfred's great name has a place in our story,

I have sailed up the Rhine, I have gazed on the Neckar,
By the banks of the Rhone and the Saone I have stood,
And, as gaily adorned as proud Paris could deck her,
Beheld the wild Seine, that dark river of blood;
But ne'er could these rivers bestow such a pleasure,
Or bring such a deep explication to rea

And the heart of Old England beats true, silver Lea!

Or bring such a deep exultation to me, As now are awoke, while I list to the measure And flow of thy waters, O sweet silver Lea! 1852.

CHILDHOOD'S HAPPY DAYS.

How dear it is to dream again
Of days long gone before,
With tender memory to retrace
The paths I trod of yore;
To roam in fancy through the scenes,
Along the fair green ways,
Where once I roamed, a careless boy,
In Childhood's happy days.

Light was my heart and joyous then,
And sweet was all around,
Fond recollection brings to mind
Each lovely spot of ground;
The smiling fields, the sunny skies,
The lark's loud matin lays;
Oh! how I loved all simple things
In Childhood's happy days!

^{*}At the time of the Danish invasion, the Danish fleet sailed some miles up the River Lea, which was then a much wider stream than it is now. King Alfred diverted the course of the river, it is supposed near Waltham Abbey, and so laid the invading fleet ground.

The friends who shared my boyish pranks,
Who answered to my call,
Whose hearts like mine were blythe and gay,
Well I remember all.
Alas! for boyhood's bliss is brief,
And boyish love decays,
And these are gone, and with them, all
My Childhood's happy days.

Some in the heavy march of life
Have fainted by the way,
And some o'er wide Atlantic seas,
In other regions stray;
And one, the friend I prized the best
Is torn from my embrace,
By fancied wrong, that chilled the love
Of Childhood's happy days.

And now the tall grim houses stand
Where I was wont to rove;
Long lines of street usurp the scenes
I loved, and still do love:
No more, upon the pastures green,
The sheep and cattle graze.
Nor sings the lark where once he sang,
In Childhood's happy days.

I wander through the suburb lone,
Where meadows were of old;
The sweets of Nature all are flown
Before the greed of gold:
But still the blessed memory lives,
And still I love to gaze,
As through a purple haze of dream,
On Childhood's happy days.

1852.

LAST NIGHT.

Last night I heard thee speak fond thoughts of love,
Last night thine eyes rayed rapture into mine;
The secret stars were peeping out above,
In very envy of such bliss divine.

We wandered out beyond the noisy town
And heard the wistful whisper of the trees,
The plashing of the river rippling down,
And the faint murmur of the evening breeze.

We sat together in a quiet spot,

Beside us waved the grasses idly blown;

And at our feet the fond Forget-me-not

Shone blue, amid the moonlight streaming down.

No tone of sorrow in the summer sound,

No touch of sadness in the summer skies,
But beauty in the wide champaign around,

And love and beauty beaming in thine eyes.

Nor any thought of grief disturbed my breast, Or wakened Memory up to tumult wild; Within my brain the Past lay hushed to rest, All sweet and silent as a sleeping child.

My arm was folded round thee, and I felt
Thy bosom beat against my own in bliss;
A moment on thy liquid look I dwelt,
Then, proud with love, poured out, in one wild kiss,

My spirit on thy lips; and in that gladness
Seemed it as though our inmost souls were blending,
A joy that compensates for every sadness,
And peerless earnest of a love unending.

Ah! what though Time, with unrelenting hand,
May sweep away our blessings, one by one,
Till Life lie shipwrecked on the beaten strand,
And Love bereft in Death be left alone!

Love cannot wholly die or pass away;
And our's shall gain with Time a deeper light,
And bloom beyond the reach of all decay;
Of such prophetic would I deem Last night!

1854.

LOVE-BLOOM.

How sweet, when after weeks of rain
Have drenched the earth, it is to view
The clouds disperse before the blue,
And watch the sun come out again.

So, dearest, now that grief is o'er,
Old trust renews his place; the gloom
Disperses, leaving all the bloom
Of love even lovelier than before.

For Doubt no longer sits above
The hearth of trust; in genial clasp
The hands are prest; the brazen asp
Is loosened from the book of Love.

We read the lesson, as of old,
In characters for aye undim,
The music of the seraphim
Translated into words of gold.

So, broadening with the broader hour, Sweet Love to lovelier prime hath grown, And from the grains of sadness sown Large joy hath budded into flower.

Oh yet, sometimes with eyesight cast Far back, the tears unbidden start, And hidden troubles vex the heart With stolen memories of the Past!

Oh yet, sometimes the grief will break
And stir the currents of the blood!
Ah well! 'tis well! she bringeth good,
A little weep and let her speek

A little weep and let her speak.

She can but tell an ancient tale
To purify the heart of Joy,
Sad foster-child of Memory,
Veiled nun that will not brook the veil.

But even then the warm caress
Shall soothe the waking sense of pain,
And every pulse of love again
Shall throb and tingle at my kiss.

1852.

THE NAMELESS WATERFALL.

Apown a rocky mountain glen at summer noon I rambled, The grasses waved about my path, and little lambkins gambolled

Among the crags, that shelved like rugged stairs the mountains tall,

When, all at once, I heard the murmur of a waterfall.

Along the mountain side it rolled, a flashing, falling stream, Its gentle waters sparkled white beneath the noontide gleam; A murmurous mountain voice it was, a nameless fameless song.

A poet singing from pure love it sweetly flowed along.

O little waterfall! roll down thy rocky mountain glen; Thy happy song may never reach the wondering ear of men; Flow down unknown and dwell alone within thy mountain hall;

A song for me, to others be a nameless waterfall!

There's wild Lodore, there's Colwith Force, there's Stanley Ghyll, and Barrow,

And rolling down its woody glen the mountain-torrent Aira, And Stock Ghyll Force, and Rydal Falls, sweet names are given them all,

But none have ever noticed thee, a nameless waterfall.

How many a poet oft like thee, unnoted in the throng, Beneath the gentle ray of love hath tuned his heart to song, No worldly voice to vex him with the jarring sound of fame, Unheeded he and glad to be a bard without a name!

Flow down thy rocky glen, sweet stream, and sing thy song alone,

Disdaining still all worldly fame, yet art thou not unknown, Not all unknown, for I have seen thee in thy native hall. And dared to name thee in my rhyme the Nameless Waterfall!

1853.

THE SEA-NYMPH.

I.

'Twas a beautiful Sea-Nymph,
Her white limbs did lave,
Disporting delighted
Amid the cool wave;
Down her wet shining shoulders
Her golden hair streamed,
And her form in the sunlight,
Like ivory gleamed.

II.

To a youth, on the sea-beach,
She pleasantly sang,
And clear as a bell
Her voice silverly rang:—
"Come hither young stranger,
All lonely I pine,
Neath the wave for a bridegroom,
O, come and be mine!

III.

I've a coralline bower
Lies under the Sea,
Where a home is prepared
For thee and for me;
Where the sea-flowers clamber,
And soft perfumes shed
Through gemm'd grot and chamber,
Our couch has been spread.

IV.

O'er all the sea-region
An empress I reign,
And mermen and mermaids
Attend in my train,
They wait on my bidding,
They fly through the brine
Fulfilling my errands,
My slaves shall be thine.

V.

Far down, 'neath the billows,
Are groves of delight,
More lovely than any
That Earth hath bedight;
There fruits full of nectar
Hang ripe on each tree,
And there thou shalt wander
And taste them with me.

VI.

Come, share my bright dwelling
Beneath the green wave,
I'll love thee with love
No earth-maiden e'er gave,
There years without measure
Together we'll reign,
'Mid royalest pleasure,
Unbroken by pain.

VII.

And see! I am lovely,—
She stretched forth her arms,
Disclosing her bosom's
Voluptuous charms;
He plunged in the waters,
He swam to her side,
And never clasped bridegroom
So beauteous a bride.

VIII.

She kissed him, and round him
Her white arms she wound,
Then dived 'neath the waves,
With a laughter-like sound,
Half delight and half scorn,
It was borne o'er the main,
And he never returned
To that sea-beach again.

1862.

ONLY A YEAR AGO. ,

I.

ONLY a year ago,

And far away on the joyous wave,

We were sailing my friend and I;

Never a truer friendship below,

Than that which, in our hearts enshrined,

Our two lives in one wreath entwined:

To-day, I gaze with a tearful eye

On the stone they have raised to mark his grave.

II.

Only a year ago,

And who could foresee our house a wreck?

Or dream that our fortunes stood not sure?

Ah me! my sire is lying low,

And we are scattered our bread to gain,

And the stranger dwells in the old domain:

To-day, as well as I may, to endure

The poor man's lot I bend my neck.

III.

Only a year ago!—
Why brood o'er my own hard private fate?—
See yon haggard and wretched girl
Mated too surely to sin and woe;
Then, ah! then she was happy and pure,
Nor dreamt the blythe bird of the fowler's lure:
To-day, only look how the virtuous curl
The lip of proud scorn at her fallen state!

IV.

Only a year ago!—
Leave care of the units, and turn thy thought,
Poet! across the sea to France,
France o'errun by the pitiless foe!
How they had laughed, those Parisians gay,
At the over-wise seer who had told of to-day:
Yet, the very devils in hell might dance
With glee, to think of the ravage wrought.

V.

Only a year ago!

How much, since then, of new and strange,
To all men hard to understand!

'Tis wisely ordered that none may know
The good or the ill that a year will bring;
Though 'tis Winter now, yet there's next
year's Spring,
Or, if Spring never come, still better, the land

Where the long long summer-time hath no change.

December 1870.

CURRAN'S DAUGHTER.

Her cheek is worn, and wan, and pale,
Her eyes, that erst with lustre shone,
Are dim with poring on the tale
Of the brave, manly-hearted one,
Too early torn from her embrace
To grace the tyrant's gleeful hour;
The smile of love upon her face
Shall light those features nevermore.
Yet is she beautiful in grief,
An added charm hath sorrow brought her;
And Erin, gazing through her tears,
May make her boast of Curran's daughter.

Not her's to join the festive throng
Where Beauty, Youth, and Pleasure meet,
Where Music wakes the swelling song,
Or times the dance to twinkling feet;
Not her's to shine in Fashion's hall,
The envy of the fair and gay,
To triumph in the giddy ball,
Her thoughts from these are far away;
She hears, afar, a people's wail,
Afar, beholds a dream of slaughter;
Her thoughts are of the grave; the dead
Possess the heart of Curran's Daughter.

And where is he, the patriot youth,
Who nobly dared to draw the brand,
And strike a blow for Right and Truth?
Answer thou crushed and bleeding land!
Oh Erin, that he loved so well,
For whom he braved the tyrant's pride,
Thou heard'st, alas, his funeral knell,
Thy proud heart broke when Emmett died;
Nor thine alone, but Curran's child
A breaking heart across the water
Hath borne; ah! would that grief might bring

But he can nevermore return,

His blood be on the tyrant's head!

Erin and she remain to mourn

A hero and a lover dead.

Her hero back to Curran's daughter.

He might have 'scaped the deadly doom,
But Love already sealed his fate,
He lingered for one last adieu,
He lingered till it was too late.
Of him, who Freedom's martyr died,
Loud be the fame o'er land and water!
While song shall live, the tale be told
Of Emmett and of Curran's Daughter.

1855.

THE WANDERER'S SONG OF HOME.

I.

It stands upon the village-green beneath the tall elm-tree, With whitened front and straw-thatched roof, how rude! yet dear to me!

Though many pass, and never turn to mark that simple cot, It hath for me too deep a spell, to be remembered not; The flower-wreathed porch, the garden-shade, the old mill-

stream hard by,

Where'er I go, through all the world, are present to mine eye; And through the years, my memory, like the morning sunshine, plays

Around that darling cottage-home,—the home of early days.

II.

'Twas there I passed my childhood's hours, so light and free from care,

'Twas there, upon a mother's knees, I learned my infant prayer,

'Twas there my noble-hearted sire his earnest counsel gave, And from that porch, I saw them bear his coffin to the grave;

'Twas there, a merry house, we kept the jovial Christmas-tide; 'Twas there I grew to hardy youth; 'twas there my sister died; There is a magic in the place that meets no stranger's gaze, To me it is a hallowed spot,—the home of early days.

III.

I never think upon that home, but I recal the time Of dreamy youth, with all its hopes and visionings sublime, When the long vista of the years with golden promise shone, And all the prospect showed a scene no shadow rested on. O, youthful hopes! O, radiant dreams! how are your glories flown,

Since I have mingled with the world and many a grief have known.

Have learned how false are human hearts, how devious human ways!

'Tis not the world I looked for in that home of early days.

IV.

And now, amid the strife and care, the heartache and the pain,

I love in memory to live o'er my boyhood once again; Full oft, in fancy, do I seem to be the careless lad,

To join my playmates on the green with merry heart and glad,

Or with my little sister roam the dells and woodland bowers, To find the blackbird's nest or pluck the yellow primrose flowers;

And all the happy Past returns, and foremost to my gaze
Appears that loved, that cottage-home, the home of early
days.

1866.

EVENTIDE.

I.

When the cool breeze of evening gently steals 'Mong woodland mazes, forest-bowers,
And through the branches gleams
The moon's pale light;

H.

When the shrill grasshopper has gone to rest, The birds have hushed their carols loud, And from the distance sounds The night-owl's scream;

III.

When the moist dews are falling all around, And tiny glow-worms light their lamps, And moths on downy wings Are flitting by;

IV.

Then let the blushing maid, with stealthy step,
Seek the familiar lovers' walk,
Where one with beating heart
Her coming waits;

V.

And as the hours unnoticed flit away,
Beneath the spreading trees attend
The youth's impetuous tale,
Dear to her heart;

VI.

For 'tis the season consecrate to Love;
That Power which gives young hearts to glow,
Hath hallowed for His Own,
The Evening Hour.

1870.

THE DAISY.

I LOVE to steal away, whene'er I can,
Beyond the haunts of wordly men and go
Far forth into the fields; where not a wind
That blows, where not a flower that decks the bank,
Where not a dew-drop glistening on the spray,
Where not a downward-glancing ray of sunshine
But preaches unto me, and louder far
And more convincing than most laboured logic,
Speaks to the heart, all-eloquent of God,
A token of his sympathy with Man.

But little sympathy I find in towns; The strife and jar of warring interests There drown the melodies of earnest song, And mid the crowd of busy selfish men, They will not give the poet room; he trills The carol of a life that is not their life; On the world's ear his song unheeded falls.

They blight my best songs oftimes in the bud, Would it were otherwise! For oh! my heart Yearns towards mankind. But out amid the fields There's naught to check my soaring; like a lark I rise on pinions of swift song, pour out My deep emotion in my Maker's ear, And bathe in atmosphere of holiest love.

To-day I sought the meadows that I love,
Though Winter hath not yet relinquished quite
The sceptre of the changing months, nor yet
Hath Nature donned her Spring attire; so sweet
An invitation gave the cloudless sky,
And by the sun so warmly seconded,
Who made for me a day of Spring in all
Save leaves and verdure,—"Wherefore stay at home?
Bright is the morn and bright the city spires
With sunshine, but oh! brighter are the fields;
To-day the birds are vocal, oh, come forth
And join thy song to their songs!"—And I went.

A favourite stroll, out at the northern suburb, A mile along the lanes, then past the wood, Up the hill-path on to the breezy hill-top, That overlooks sweet Hornsey; there to muse On many things, while seated on the stile, Where, when an eager boy, ten years ago, I carved the ambitious letters of my name.

But lo! just peeping into view a daisy, The earliest of the year; I will not pluck thee, Thou pretty harbinger of coming Spring; Bloom on, and as thy fellows rise around thee, Tell them that thou art celebrate in song.

How deep an influence, Daisy, thou hast wrought Upon my heart, sweet unpretending floweret! For I am one of those within whose breasts A little thing can stir up strong emotions; The chirking of a summer grasshopper, An eddy curling in a river-stream, The falling of a flake of snow in winter, The simple budding of an early flower Are things to waken up more lasting thought Within this sensitive brain, than all the strange Events belonging unto courts and crowns.

For thou art there a type of human life, And, as the babe, sweet blossom of a love That years can change not, just bestowed upon me, Wilt bloom thy day and beautify the fields, Doomed then to wither, fall away and die. Die! but to rebloom with returning years, And so doth human life rebloom in Heaven.

Poemetti.

I.

NATURE, THE MIRROR OF GOD.

THE All-Creative Mind,
In the vast fabric of its works hath wrought
An image of itself, wherein we scan,
As in a book distinctly charactered,
Its ever-active and embodied thoughts.

1880.

II.

NOTHING LOST.

In this great myriad-teeming universe Decay and Death seem only, but are not; Here nothing is destroyed, here nothing lost, But by processive alchemy of change From shape to shape transformed, from life to life Transfused, in infinite diversity.

1880.

III.

DEAD HOPES.

Dead hopes, within the chambers of the heart, Unburied lie, and tearfully the soul Gazes upon them, feeding on the smiles Which still they wear, that made them beautiful, And, as a mother o'er her lifeless babes, Sobs out the woe that will not break their sleep.

IV.

THE FIRST OF MAY.

So thou art come at length, delightful May!
With thy lark's songs and sunshine, making a day
Of Jubilee; waking to laughing mirth
With thy glad smiles all frolic things of earth;
And as thou wanderest in among the bowers,
And through the fair green fields, scattering the flowers
With lavish hand around thee, everywhere;
Each bud a promise given of the near
Approach of the Queen Summer, with her blooms,
And luscious fruits and wealth of warm perfumes;
Her handmaid sent before, with dainty care
The tasteful decorations to prepare
For her high festival, and to array
All her attendants for her gala-day.

1862.

v.

RONDEAU TO THE SEA.

WIDE-HEAVING Sea, that surging to the shore,
Thy sounding song repeatest, o'er and o'er!
Whose burden, on the ear falling sublime,
Deep thought unutterable in prose or rhyme
Stirs in me, piercing to life's inmost core;
So that I long upon Thy waves, before
The wind to fleet, across thine ocean floor,
To some far distant and unwonted clime,
Wide-heaving Sea!

Over the deep, away, beyond the uproar
Of the world's strife, and all its sorrows sore,
Soon shall I pass beyond the range of time,
To that immortal land where angels chime
A sweeter strain, and there shall be no more
Wide-heaving Sea!

VI.

THE EARTH AND HEAVEN VOICES.

The voices of Earth, how sweet are the measures,
They warble around us, to ravish our ears!
As they sing of the treasures, the glories and pleasures,
That wait on our wooing, to gladden our years;
And we follow the lure of their treacherous strain,
O'er morass and through brere till the song's sad

refrain,
Comes mocking the sense with its "Vain! all in

vain!"

The voices of Heaven, how solemn and saintly,
Through crypts where the body may pass not they float!
It is but a musical whisper, that faintly

Just reaches the ear of the soul with its note.

And we heed not the sound of the heavenly strain,

For the Earth-voices drown its kinder refrain,

Which heard had not mocked with a "Vain! all in

1882.

VII.

To V

V——, it is good that sorrow comes, At intervals, a little dusky cloud, With woven tissues fine To hide the light of Love;

Or we should tire of Love, as surfeited Upon the purple fruitage of his lips.—

The cloud drops down the rain Upon the thirsty flower;—

A little while, and all the gloom is flown;
The sun mounts high the clear untroubled blue;
And love shines on the soul
More radiant than before.

VIII.

MUSIC AT EVENING.

Soft sounds upon the twilight air,
That seem, from Heaven, to borrow
A spell to drive away all care,
And charm the heart of sorrow;
O, linger yet,
Till I forget
My spirit's anguish wholly,
Or from my heart,
As ye depart,
Bear hence my melancholy!

Upon the breeze they die away,
Still faint and fainter growing,
Only my sorrow seems to stay,
No pause her dirges knowing;
Ah! why sweet strains
Deceive my pains?
Soon as my spirit yearneth
To drain the measure
Of your deep pleasure,
Ye die, and grief returneth.

1863.

IX.

BLIGHTED LOVE.

Summer past, the birds take wing,
To return again with Spring;
And the plant, which fades to-day,
Will rebloom with next year's May;
Vessels, sailing o'er the track
Of far seas, to port come back;
But the love in human bosoms,
Once 'tis blighted, ne'er more blossoms,
And the fickle hearts, that sever,
Sundered are and sad for ever.

X.

TO A SINGER.

Thy song was sweet, as the strains that float, On a warm Spring-day, from the forest trees; And my spirit hung on each silvery note,

As on clustering blooms hang the clinging bees; Yet, still she seemed to thirst and pant, As troubled by some hidden want.

For thoughts awoke at the sound of thy voice,
If an earthly strain such bliss can bring,
Oh, what must it be to share their joys,
Who hear in heaven the angels sing?
And I longed on the waves of thy song to rise,
And drink in the music of Paradise.

1863.

XI.

STANZAS:

SUGGESTED BY TASSO'S

Beginning-"E come alpestree rapido torrente."

Swift as the brooklet ripples down the dell,
Or meteor shoots athwart the night,
Or wild breeze sweeps and bends the lily-bell,
Our glories take their flight;
And as the rose-bloom withers on its spray,

So fades the memory of our names away.

As stateliest forest trees at length decay,
Our highest earthly hopes must perish;
And even love and friendship will not stay,
But all that here we cherish,
Even as ourselves, must suffer change and die;
Well, then, for him whose hopes are shrined on high.

1862.

XII.

EPIGRAM.

DEDICATED TO OUR AGNOSTIC SCIENTISTS.

ERE Science reigned, and men this world supposed One mighty plane, by Heaven's vast arch enclosed, O'erhung with starry gems, the Earth they trod With reverent steps, and owned the LIVING GOD. But now, that Science hath disclosed to view Worlds crowding upon worlds, all Nature through, At name of GOD, our sages shake the head, And prate of something nick-named FORCE instead. 1800.

XIII.

SONG.

The beauty that shone in thy features of yore Has vanished, and girlhood's sweet charms are no more, But, while still in thine eyes Love's fond glances I see, Thou canst not be other than beauteous to me.

I too have lost much of the freshness of youth, But not its affection and gladness and truth; And tho' Time change all else, it can break not the tie That we knotted, dear love, in the days long gone by. 1870.

XIV.

TO JULIA.

Τ.

Hast thou seen the sunbeam leaping 'Mong the silver streams by day? Hast thou seen the shadows creeping On, as daylight wears away? Such our life is: never single:

Thus it ever must befal,
That the lights and shadows mingle
In the earthly lot of all.

II.

Yet, ah yet, sweet Julia, could I
Shape the course of life for thee,
With a simple rhyme! then would I
Have thy life all sunshine be;
Joy unblent with melancholy,
Years that tears may never stain,
Pure and spotless pleasure, wholly

Undisturbed by touch of Pain.

III.

But there is a land, fair maiden,
Brighter far than this, nor e'er
Are its dwellers sorrow-laden,
For no shadows enter there:
Oh! to thee may grace be given
Here a blameless life to lead,
That, when life is past, in Heaven
Thou mayst find a home indeed.

1858.

XV.

SONG.

To and fro, the lilies blow,
With a lazy murmur,
And the burr-bees come and go,
Hiving sweets of summer;
Yet amid the pleasant time
Grief thrusts in a splinter;
Autumn evenings, come and go,
Leading up the winter.

Heigho, to and fro,

(Would I might dissemble!)

Like a wave doth come and go

My heart with sudden tremble.

And I cannot but be glad,

Oh poor heart of folly!

Love is bosom-friend of woe,

And spouse of Melancholy.

XVI.

TO----

WITH A VOLUME OF POEMS.

HERE are clustered poems like roses, Culled and bound in wreathed posies, Now that June is at her full, To deck thee with, My Beautiful! For a little birthday token Of the sweet love-chain unbroken; Let the little token speak, Our love-chain can never break.

Take the gift, dear, of thy lover, And upon the page discover, Typed in magic poetry, Love's own golden minstrelsy. 1852.

XVII.

STANZAS.

I.

My heart is heavy as a weight of lead
And chilly as a stone,
Now that my hope is numbered with the dead
And Love is left alone,
An orphan who hath lost his way,
Amid unsheltered woods on winter day.

II.

Unfaithful Hope, was't well to leave me thus,
All in the frozen morn,
To wander lone among the barren boughs
That point at me with scorn,
While scoffing winds pass by and say,
"See how the love-lorn fool doth pine away?"

III.

Oh! whither traitor hast thou taken wing?

And wilt thou come again,

With the young blossoms and the virgin spring?

Ah! 'twill be in vain.

Ere buds come out, or Earth receives

A touch of warmth, I'll lie with last year's withered leaves. 1853.

POEMETTI.

XVIII.

SONG.

TO EMMA.

T.

The years are swift of wing, Emma!
They will not stay for ever;
But Time no change can bring, Emma!
Our true hearts to dissever.
And Love with us is still the same,
Though many a friend lies buried,

And many a dream hath flown away,
Since thou and I were married.

II.

We cannot call back youth, Emma!
And our young days are past;
But the bright unclouded truth, Emma!
Time cannot overcast,
And Love with us is still the same,
Though Youth lies dead and buried.

Constant and warm as on the day,
When thou and I were married.

1858.

XIX.

HUMBLE MUSIC.

Song sounds not less musically, Swelling upward from the valley, Like a fresh aspiring fountain, Than when rolling from the mountain, Like an avalanche.

Let the strong impulsive spirit,
Who hath gained the lofty summit,
Fling his loud melodious thunder
Down the hills and make with wonder
Tremble every leaf and branch.

Warbling music in the valley,
Thorough pleasant grot and alley,
Theming many a joyous matter,
Unambitious I will scatter
Forth my songs, like spray;

Hymning measures calm and holy;
Deeming that the poor and lowly
Will not scorn the humble singer,
Will not slight the music-bringer,
Will not wish the bard away.

1856.

XX.

FAREWELL TO WENSLEYDALE.

(IMPROMPTU LINES ALONG THE ROAD FROM WEST BURTON TO AYSGARTH STATION, ON THE OCCASION OF LEAVING THE DALE SCENERY).

FAREWELL to thy bowers and faëry cascades, Farewell to thy brooklets and pastoral glades; No more shall my steps linger 'mid each gay scene, Where stirred with poetic delight I have been;

No more where the thundering force rolleth down Shall I list to his song of magnificent tone; No more from the height of the bald barren scar View the slumbering dales as they stretch out afar.

I go to my home in the South far away, Where no mountains tower up and no waterfalls play; Yet there, as I hear the dull roar of the sea, 'Twill re-echo the voice of thy torrents to me.

1882.

XXI.

THE OPEN WINDOW.

She is looking out at the casement,
My love, who so lovely as she?
As radiant she stands in the moonlight,
She is looking and watching for me.

From the city out through the long suburb
The strollers by two and by three,
Are passing, but she never heeds them,
My darling is watching for me.

A minute—no more—I'll be with her, And you peering planet shall see A lover a maiden embracing, And will envy my darling and me.

XXII.

TO A SKYLARK.

O LARK, could I but fly with thee, Yon boundless ether winging; And could I sing a song as free As that which thou art singing,

The world might scorn, I would not heed, Content with mine own pleasure, As thou, within thy native Heaven, With thine own thrilling measure.

1862.

XXIII.

WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

To say I will not pen a line,
I'm sure would be inhuman;
So though I've never gazed upon
Or talked to Fanny Newman;
And though I have but little skill
In epigram and epitaph
And such like things,—here goes!—at least
I can't refuse my autograph.

1861.

XXIV.

"REMEMBER!"

O BRIEF but sad record!
One sweet, one only word,
Traced ineffaceably upon my heart,
Ere thou didst rend in twain its tenderest chord,
That night, to meet again, Love saw us part;—
"Remember!"

"To meet!" Ah! Nevermore!
The light, thy false eyes wore,
Flashed but to slay the soul they did enthral.
That night's sweet treacherous smiles revolving
o'er,

Whose morrow gave the stab—I must—I shall "Remember."

XXV.

OUT AT SEA.

Let go the moorings! spread the sail!
And hoist the pennon to the breeze!
How blythely springs the freshening gale
To bear us o'er the lonely seas!
We leave the weary land behind,
The noisy quay, the hateful shore,
And driving fast before the wind,
No need to ply the labouring oar.

The sun, from yonder spreading blue,
Pours down his bright and golden ray,
And tinges with a rainbow hue
The myriad drops of scattering spray;
The maiden sits upon the deck
And warbles forth a lightsome song;
There's nought our gallant course to check,
And pleasantly we sail along.

High overhead the seamew screams,
And on the surface of the brine
The long green shoal of mackerel gleams,
And sparkles in the sunny shine;
The land-line wears a distant brown,
And gay the maiden sings and smiles:—
Blow, blow ye winds! and bear us down,
Ere nightfall, to the Golden Isles!

1866.

XXVI.

S. L. H.

овит, макси 17тн, 1884.

BRIGHT Spirit, so joyous in this world of sadness,
Whose presence around thee spread sunshine and light;
Thou art passed to those realms where thy life is all gladness,
Where the summer ne'er wanes and the day has no night;
And while, here, we sorrow to see thee no more,
Thou art welcomed with love on you heavenly shore.

XXVII.

'Tis sweet to roam in the meadows,
When the Autumn woods are brown,
While the soft and soul-like shadows
Of eve come creeping down;
While the night-bird's song is swaying
To and fro in the breeze,
And through the brain come straying
Dear vagrant memories.

The dreams and the blisses of boyhood
Once to the mind so fair,
They have grown like the leaves that are falling
And leaving the branches bare;
Yet the Autumn-leaves wear a beauty
They wore not in the Spring,
And sweet are the faded visions of youth,
And the songs I used to sing.

1858.

XXVIII.

SONG.

Ī.

On Summer-eve we roamed the wood,
Mine arm was circling round thee,
And the spell of thine eyes leapt into my blood,
And in trance of passion bound me;
The nightingale sang, in the branches above,
Her wild delirious blisses,

And I with rapture fed, my girl, On thy red lips' luscious kisses:

Then sing "Heigh!" for the love that made its bowers

Where the songs of the nightingales soar; And sing "Ho!" for the love that once was ours,

But alas! is ours no more!

II.

For the dream that is flown sing,—"Well away!" Ah! wherefore should we sorrow That the treasure we call ours to-day. Another owns to-morrow? False girl! thou'rt clasped in other arms, But think not that I'm grieving, For there are other maids as fair.

And doubtless as deceiving:

Then sing "Heigh!" for the maid who shall next be won

By a smile and a sweet caress: And sing "Ho!" for the false one, now, that's gone. Another's lips to press!

1863.

XXIX.

MINISTERING ANGELS.

Coming and going, through the dim Twilight crypts of human thought, Evermore we may hear The footsteps of the angels; And they whisper comfort In the hour of pain; And they warble their music In the pauses of the storm of passion, And oft, in the dark night of sorrow, We may see the tender light of Heaven Flashing from their white wings.

1862.

XXX.

As the sunshine, after showers, Falls upon the moistened flowers, And they lift their drooped heads Laughingly from their green beds, So thy love came on my heart, After my fierce sorrow's smart, And in light of thy dear eyes, All unlovely memories Of grief and wrong were drowned awhile, And joy returned with thy sweet smile.

XXXI.

EDUCATION.

Form your instructions on a careful plan, 'Tis the boy's training that creates the Man.

1870.

XXXII.

POESY AND MADNESS.

BEAUTIFUL, delicate fancies that haunt the soul in her sadness, Bringing her solace and balm, till she forgetteth her woe; Say, O ye delicate fancies! are ye the kindred of madness,

Hovering just on the brink bordering Reason's o'erflow?
Oft have I heard it affirmed, though I assume not to know;

Critical brains have discovered that Poesy is the twin-sister, Bearing a family-likeness to Craziness. If it be so,

Poet be thankful, that roaming the bowers of song thou hast miss'd her,

Whom thou hadst rather avoid, and instead art espoused to the sister.

1873.

XXXIII.

To THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P.

GLADSTONE, how like the firm oak, that disdaining the tempest and thunder,

Towers high and unmoved, with its fibres deep-rooted under the sod.

Thou hast scorned the clamour of Envy, and given to the world a new wonder,

A statesman having a conscience, and true to himself and his God.

1873.

XXXIV.

THE SUN. THE LEAF AND THE WIND.

The golden Sun shines on the emerald leaf,
And she warms to his wanton beams;
But the golden Sun he stands aloof,
And while of his love she dreams,
Hither comes dancing the frolicsome Wind,
And kisses her there on the spray,
And catches her up in his rude embrace,
And carries and whirls her away.

1885.

XXXV.

THE STARS.

YE stars that shine above,
Filling the heavens with glory,
E'en as we gaze upon you, ye rebuke
The petty pride of Man,
And pour contempt on all
His littleness of mind;
Ye speak to us of Him,
Who set you there like gems
Sparkling upon the forehead of the Night;
The visible tokens of the Invisible One,
The Infinite, the Eternal, the Great Soul,
The Universal God,
Whose robe, in all her multitudinous
Variety of form, is that we call
Vast Nature's wide extent.

1891.

Poems on Special Occasions.

THE FOURTEENTH OF SEPTEMBER 1852.

It was a dull and grey September even,
The Autumn mist was trembling on the night,
And sadly boding, through the starless heaven,
Glimmered the features of the pale Moonlight.

Swayed to and fro, like a dark funeral tassel,
One banner quivered to the nightly breeze,
Above the turret of the gloomy castle
That frowned in sullen grandeur o'er the seas.

Without—the mournful ocean waves were sighing, The hollow winds shuddered along the strand; Within—the good old warrior lay dying, Or sleeping, dreamed he of the better land.

Upon his features lay a solemn beauty, A plumëd smile played round about his lips, He rested in the winter of his duty, Like a full sun in grandeur of eclipse.

Along the night there stole a solemn shadow,
Like a huge warrior clothed in sable pall,
A moment, and he passed; so, o'er the meadow
The early shades of evening twilight fall.

Come slowly, softly come, dark desolation!
Oh Morn, break, sadly break on wave and shore!
And tell the whispered secret to the nation,
Her best and bravest hero is no more!

AN ADDRESS.

WRITTEN FOR THE MEETING OF A LITERARY SOCIETY.

WHILE the sere leaves are mellowing to the fall, And Autumn crowned with glory far and wide, Like a great conqueror o'er the battle field, Roameth in search of spoil, and autumn rites Are kept right merrily, and the fair fruits Of Nature, bounteous giver, are stored in,
And the sheaves piled on high, the festive board
Laden with ruby wine, and clustering grapes,
And heaps of dates and gourds and pomegranates,
We too keep here an Autumn festival;
And not one crown alone hath the great king,
But he is doubly crowned, and Knowledge comes,
Clasped hand in hand with Wisdom, and with song
And triumph-shout and flowing oratory,
Ay! all the gifts of Thought and Poesy,
She showers a fitting tribute at his feet.

Sweet is it to clasp mutual hands, and greet With mutual voice, and softly interchange The mutual thoughts and courtesies of friends. Oh! sweet it is to stand among our own, Those whom we love, and trust and long have known, And smile upon them, and win back their smiles, And strive for their applause and feel it ours, And know our worth is not unnoticed! Ah! This is a joy that only Friendship gives, 'Twere worth a thousand flowers by stranger hands Culled, and in garlands wreathed, and waving high To mark a triumph: or a thousand shouts Of stranger tongues, blown on the breath of Fame, And hailing the triumphant; worthier far This joy, and such a joy to-night is ours.

Dear Friends! You come, we come as votaries This night at Wisdom's shrine. Her plenteous horn, For you, for us, is stored with gifts and well Attests the giver's opulence. 'Tis Mind,-Mind that alone on sin-polluted Earth Still bears the stamp of Godhead, and that first Startled old Chaos in creative Word,— 'Tis Mind hither entices us, and here Gathered before her shrine beholds her own. What hath she not accomplished? She hath taken The raw material of created things And shaped them to her use, and sent them forth, Her missions to perform, her errands bear, From corner to far corner of the World; She by her magic science hath upclomb To high Olympus, and Prometheus-like,

Hath stolen the quenchless fire of Zeus, brought down The precious theft to Earth, and like a God To dumb dead matter given a life and voice,

Oh! not for us the idle dreams of life That the weak-spirited oft dream; itis not For us to soothe our souls in sleepfulness. Or steep the senses in impure delights, Forgetting our great treasure, God's fair gift, This life within a life, our Human Mind, Mind half divine! No, we love sterner tasks, And seek to test the gem and prove its worth, Be nobler minds and nobler sons of God. What though the task be difficult and hard, Our souls are stronger for the pains of life! To brave the thousand dangers of the world, And grapple with the force of circumstance, And be as kings in knowledge, not as children, This is our elder pride, to front the skies And stand triumphant 'mid the shocks of doom.

So this sweet feast to Mind is consecrate, And all the fruits we bring result of Mind, Oh not her noblest fruits perchance, but still Her fruits; and knowing this we have no fear Of their acceptance, glad to lavish them, And be approved by those we hold our friends. 1852.

INVECTIVE STANZAS.*

WRITTEN DURING THE CRIMEAN WAR.

WHILE Europe, convulsed with the furies of war,
Is maddened and drunk with the blood of the slain,
While our brethren are falling in regions afar,
A sacrifice offered and offered in vain;

^{*} This invective is here given, with but a slight verbal alteration, as it appeared in the columns of *The Empire* newspaper. The reader is requested to bear in mind that it belongs to the Author's political youth and to a time when the whole country was wrought up to a high pitch of excitement. However still he may regard Lord Palmerston's policy as having been mistaken, yet at this date he is with the foremost to admit, that as a statesman his lordship deserved well of his country.

At home the false statesman makes gain of our grief, Delights in our ruin, exults in our shame, Plants treacherous hands on our rights, like a thief, And on Liberty tramples in Liberty's name.

Our glorious inheritance, left us of old, Now entrusted to robbers is dwindling away, The flame on the altar of Freedom burns cold, Our lustre is paling and dimmed is our day.

Our annals are bright with the fame of the free,
That not all the oblivion of ages can hide,
Proclaiming afar from the Isle of the sea
How Cromwell hath fought and Hampden hath died.

But where Cromwell once wielded the sceptre of power And Milton sat firm in the council of state, Now a Palmerston rules, little lord of the hour, And the pander to tyrants sits tyrant elate.

Where the Euxine's dark wave laves the desolate shore, Our army hath struggled, our heroes have bled, That Austria may revel and riot in power, And build up her throne on the bones of the dead.

O England, dear England, how vain is thy dream!
Could Alma's brave heroes arise from the grave,
Then, indeed, might some warning these horrors redeem,
That but rivet the chains on the limbs of the slave.

Thy treasures are lavished, thy blood is outpoured,
Thy children are slaughtered in pitiless wars,
That tyrannic controul may be firmly secured
And the freedom of Europe, expelled from her shores.

O people of England, awake from your dream, Nor longer endanger the freedom ye love! Bid the gray-headed villain, who sports with the stream Of British emotion, his earnestness prove.

Let him blind us no longer with flattering lies,
But Poland arouse from her slumber of doom,
Bid the land of the Magyar from ashes arise
And call up the genius of Rome from the tomb.

While yet in the heart of our country remains
A spark of the spirit that warmed her of yore,
While yet our home-island the memory retains
Of the heroes of freedom she cherished before;

Let a voice of long, loud indignation be raised
At the men who would plunge us in ruin and shame;
Be the tale of disgrace from our annals erased
And revived the old glory and pride of our name.

1855.

FUNERAL ODE.

ON THE DEATH OF FERGUS O'CONNOR, M.P.

Hushed is that voice, that heart is cold,
And stilled the working of that mind
Fashioned in Freedom's firmest mould;
He hath not left his like behind.
Oh, sons of toil! the man that here
Now sleeps so silent was your friend;
His soul, so simple and severe,
Not all the tyrant's arts could bend.
So bold a foeman of the wrong—
A champion of the right so brave;
For ever dear to patriot song,
And hallowed be O'Connor's Grave.

'Twas here they laid him down to rest,
The men who knew and loved his worth;
And gave her bravest and her best
Back to the arms of Mother Earth:
His island home is o'er the sea,
But his best days were lavished here;
And to the child of Liberty,
Where'er Man dwells that land is dear;
Peace to his dust! sweet be his sleep!
While guardian flowers about him wave,
And kindred spirits come and weep
Their sorrows o'er O'Connor's grave.

But who are these in serpent guise,
Oh! lost to every sense of shame,
Above this grave who spit their lies,
And fain would blast the patriot's fame?
No longer can he lift his head
To front you in the sight of God!

O spare the memory of the dead, And leave him underneath the sod! Respect the bounds of Death and Life;— Let England spurn the dastard slave, Who seeks to raise the winds of strife And discord o'er O'Connor's Grave.

With us, for whom he spent his breath, Doth his rich legacy remain; There is an eloquence in death, Which tells us idle tears are vain. The hope, his noble heart that warmed, Still unattained before us lies.— Still Freedom's work is unperformed. And Truth lives, though her Champion dies; While in Death's solemn shade we stand. And funeral plumes above us wave, Let's pledge the vow, and seal the hand Of Freemen o'er O'Connor's Grave!

1855.

ODE.

OF ON THE DEATH THE PRINCE CONSORT.

NINE moons have scarce their orbits run. Since Brunswick's star was dimmed with tears. And dying honoured, full of years, We mourned the Mother of our Queen:

And scarcely have our hearts begun

To hush their griefs and glean From Time forgetfulness of woe. When lo! the Archer from his bow

Hath winged another dart; And cruel tidings, swiftly borne From home to home one Sabbath morn, O'er all the Land a gloom have flung, And with a sudden anguish wrung

Each loyal English heart. For he, for whom no British breast But glowed with loyal warmth confest, And prayed, each night ere seeking rest,

A blessing on his head,

Consort of her, our Island's pride, Her husband, counsellor and guide, Is rudely taken from her side, And our Good Prince is dead!

How shall we keep our Christmas? How The festive dance and game prolong? How raise aloud the merry song? Or twine above the blazing hearth

Or twine above the blazing hearth

The mistletoe and holly bough,

Those genial signs of mirth? Alas! 'Twill be a mournful time, For who, the sound of Death's dull chime,

With laughter dare profane? No twinkling footsteps grace the ball, No faces throng the lighted hall, This is no time for festival! For lo! a Royal Funeral

Glides through the solemn fane; And he to England's throne the Heir, And his royal brethren are there, With warriors, statesmen round the bier,

Who many a tear let fall:
While in her room, she sits apart
With streaming eyes and aching heart,
Our widowed Queen: Great God impart
Thy grace! Allay her sorrow's smart!
O hear a nation's call!

Lord we adore Thy hidden ways!

Dark and mysterious Thy designs;

We cannot read the awful lines

Writ in Thy Book of Providence,

Discovered ne'er to mortal gaze,

Nor scanned by human sense; Yet will we trust, nor doubt Thy Love, We know that, from Thy throne above,

Thou rulest all things well;
And though we may not understand
This sorrow sent upon our Land,
Still will we deem in Love Thy hand

Hath woke this funeral knell.

And could we lift the veil and see
The glories of Eternity,
We should not mourn Our Prince, that he

With Death hath passed away;
For he was great and pure and wise,
His soul a stranger to disguise;
This day, that fills with tears our eyes,
On him hath dawned, in yonder skies,
His Coronation-Day!

December, 1861.

EPITHALAMION.

ON OCCASION OF THE NUPTIALS OF THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES.

ĭ.

Now let the loyal harps of England ring
With joyous minstrelsy on every side!
The marriage-morning of her future King
May well stir up the old poetic pride,
And fire each bard to bring
His tuneful offering,
To greet the Royal Bridegroom and his Bride,

II.

For who that, cradled in the Muses' bower,
Hath learned the witchery of that sweet clime,
The secret of divine Apollo's power
Hath won, to build the ode or weave the rhyme
Could, on a day like this,
Withhold his melodies,
Nor feel the inspiration of the time?

III.

And doubtless he, around whose worthy brow
The well-earned laurel of the poet twines,
Who sang of Enid and her spouse, will now
This spousal celebrate in fitting lines;
As who should hymn a lay
More worthy of the day,
Than the crowned priest of all Apollo's silver
shrines?

IV.

Nor mine the matchless, all-commanding skill; Yet, natheless, I will wake my weaker strain; Its murmur musical the falling rill Withholdeth not, because the rolling main Peals out a mightier tone:

And I, too, would make known The loyal thoughts that leap within my brain.

Methinks I see a gallant bark set sail From the Norse land, across the waters wide, With pennons proudly waving to the gale; She brings to England's shores the Royal Bride. And ne'er did vessel bear Away a freight so fair,—

Her path o'er the deep sea may all good angels guide!

VI.

Upon the deck I see a lady stand, Of noble form and mien of majesty; She gazes on the fast-receding land; Why starts the tear unbidden to her eye? There lies her maiden home: And of the days to come, Vain were the attempt the features to descry.

Yet not in sadness doth that tear-drop start; For her the sacred bridal rites await. And the dear love of a true princely heart, And the warm welcomes of a mighty state,

A nation's gladsome voice, Proud of her Prince's choice. And proud of him whose worth hath won his

peerless mate.

VIII.

Then swiftly glide above thine ocean-floor, O happy bark that holds so rich a freight! And safely bear her to the expectant shore— O happy shore on which her steps alight! The crowd, with buzzing stir, Divides a path for her;

O happy crowd, whose gaze rests on so sweet a sight!

IX.

With what a modest dignity she treads!

Her form, how clothed with native queenly grace!

What open truth her countenance o'erspreads!

And how the noble heart shines through her

face!

And as the maids of Kent,
Blushing, their flowers present,
How bland her smiles in which their rich reward
they trace!

X.

Now haste, ye intervening days, away!
Ye hours, fleet by, on rapid pinions borne!
God Hymen chafes, impatient of delay:
So speed your flight, and bring the wished-for morn,
While amid soft sunrise,
And blue propitious skies,
And rainbow hues the illustrious day is born!

XI.

This year, wild March, thy blustering winds forbear,

Or else change places with the dainty May! Upon the nuptials of so sweet a pair,

Tis meet the heavens should glance their kindliest ray.

Nor voice of winter rude Ungraciously intrude To mar the music of the bridal day.

XII.

O happy Prince, that, waking, look'st upon
The ripe fulfilling of thy dear desire!
Our land rejoices in thy joy, loved son
Of a too early lost lamented sire!
For, lo! in thee, we deem,
Dwells all that dwelt in him
Of worth we ne'er shall cease to reverence and
admire.

XIII.

For thou wilt reproduce his stainless life,
Wearing thy manhood with a soul serene;
And the blest maid, so soon to be thy wife,
Will wear her womanhood, ev'n as our Queen,
Thy mother, hers hath worn,

With virtues that adorn,—

A diadem more royal than ev'n her crown hath been!

XIV.

But hark, that sound across the waters stealing, Where silver Thames glides under Windsor's towers!

How joyously the chapel-bells are pealing!

No happier strains within their woodland bowers

The feathered minstrels sing;

For these soft tinklings bring

Blushing from her retreat the loveliest of the

Hours.

XV.

The crowd is gathered in the sacred fane,
And as the last peals tremble on the air,
Its rich vibrations shaking floor and pane,
The rolling organ tones its music rare;
And through the open doors
The gay procession pours;
And see, they come, the royal bridal pair!

XVI.

Surrounded by her princes and her peers,
Upon the daïs the Royal Mother sits;
Along the path of unforgotten years,
Back to another day her memory flits,
Day when her troth was given
To him that's now in Heaven;
Then smiles a blessing on them through her tears.

XVII.

And, though all undescried of mortal eye,
Yet can the poet's keener sense behold
The man we almost worship standing by,
Calm and majestic as in days of old;
With angel-glance that sheds
Upon their youthful heads
A thousand heavenly blessings, manifold.

XVIII.

By the high altar, while all Heaven looks down,
They hand in hand their loving troth do plight;
By the high altar, while all Heaven looks down,
The holy prelate consecrates the rite;
With voice of solemn tone,

With voice of solemn tone,

Now wed, proclaims them one,—

"Whom God hath joined let no man disunite!"

XIX.

The rites are done; and, once more, overhead,
Begins the jocund laughter of the bells;
The neighbouring steeples catch their mirth, and
spread

The merry music on, o'er fields and fells,
Till, all the land around,
Each belfry shakes with sound,
And one vast peal of ringing joy upswells,

XX.

And now begins the festive holiday,
With blazoned banners waving in the air,
And crowds that from their homes come trooping

While each doth his white wedding-favour wear.

But, ere we join the throng,

'Tis meet we close the song,
In solemn verse breathing a solemn prayer.

XXI,

Great King of kings, Almighty Lord of all,
The sceptre Thine of universal sway;
Before whose Throne monarchs themselves must
fall.

Whom prince and peasant must alike obey;
God of all grace, to Thee
A nation bows the knee,

Renignly daign. O Lord to hear us when y

Benignly deign, O Lord, to hear us when we pray!

XXII.

On these young hearts, new wed, let fall Thy grace, And with Thy blessing bless their bridal day! And as the years their onward journey trace, Oh, may it be to pave with flowers their way!

May they with minds in tune

Make one glad honeymoon

Of life, while months to them seem but a lengthening May.

XXII.

And when at length (though distant be the time)
Thy Providence shall call them to a throne,
Like her who reigns, oh, may they reign sublime
In a loyal people's love, that all may own
How great, how good they are;
And Fame shall sound afar,
"How great, how good they are," from echoing
zone to zone!

March, 1863.

IN MEMORIAM.*

RICHARD COBDEN, M.P.

OBIIT APRIL 2ND, 1865.

THE holy Sabbath morning sweetly shone, Bright with the early spring, o'er all the land Shedding delicious warmth; and loud from spire, And minster-tower, the bells inviting pealed, To call the people to the House of God.

But, while in England's fanes of prayer, her sons In worship bent to God the reverent knee, The great heart of her noblest patriot lay Fluttering upon the awful verge of life: Calm in the sunshine of that Sabbath morn, Forth from the land he loved his spirit passed, Leaving a name behind him that shall live For ever in our annals and our hearts.

Not his had been to champion hosts to war, And braving danger at the cannon's mouth, To pluck from hands of Carnage Glory's wreath;

^{*}These lines appeared originally, at the time in the columns of the Portsmouth Times.

But his had been a better, grander strife, Contesting against Wrong, by force of Truth To wrest, from purblind rulers in their pride, The rights of millions; free the hands of Trade, Unbind the chains of Commerce, and unbar The gates that stemmed the prosperous-flowing tide Of Enterprise, and charter Industry.

Sprung from the People, unto them were given The labors of his life. How well he toiled, Wrote, pleaded, triumphed, let the blessings poured By grateful thousands on his name attest! Bold in the Senate, skilful in debate, He urged persuasively the toilers' claims, And hungry Famine lent her voice to his, And pampered Luxury was forced to yield, And take the tax from off the People's bread.

Nor, this great victory won, did he then cease
His noble efforts for his fellow men.
What great Reform, which he e'er failed to aid?
What danger menaced, did not find him prompt
To warn? What folly ever seized upon
The rulers and the ruled, with sober speech
That he exposed not? Peace, Economy,
Freedom, the Franchise for the sons of Toil,
These found in him their earnest advocate;
Nor least of all his triumphs be it told,
His was the task, in bonds of amity,
To join two nations long at envious feud,
And hush their mutual jealousies for aye.

Nor ever proffered bait, nor gilded lure, Had power to turn him from his onward course Of patriotic toil. Almost alone He stood, a pure, unselfish citizen:
No title graced his unadornëd name, No star of honour glittered on his breast, He wore no coronet upon his brow, No ribbon on his knee; upright and true, He was the People's own, and,—People's Man,—Remained plain Richard Cobden to the last.

All honour to the great and wise and good! Father! we ill can spare him; but we bow

Our wills to Thine; for we are Thine, and Thine The praises that we owe for such a man; Amid thy Heaven of Glory, we believe He wears a starry crown. O let Thy smile Still rest in blessing on our island home! Preserve our good, our every ill destroy, Protect our liberties, prolong our peace, And give us other patriots such as he!

IRONICAL INVECTIVE

WRITTEN DURING THE APPREHENSIONS ENTERTAINED OF A VISITATION OF ASIATIC CHOLERA.

Ι.

PREPARE him a Welcome, the terrible Guest,
Who is nearing our shores by the way of the South;
You demur!—yet methinks that his might is confest,
And the fame of his doings hath filled every mouth;
When illustrious strangers have come hitherto,
I have seen you crowd forth with tumultuous acclaim;
You worship success; yet I deem there are few,
Whose triumphs, than his, are more bruited by Fame.

II.

Receive him with honour in palace and hall,

The hero of many a marvellous feat!

For surely, at grand civic banquet and ball,

To fête him as usual would only be meet;

You demur! there are slums where the Bedouins herd,

All reeking with filth, will fit lodging provide;

But what if, my lord, your boudoir be preferred,

Or in your own carriage he chooses to ride?

III.

What to do with your starvelings and Arabs has long
Been a troublesome problem, to you and your class;
To dispatch them yourselves were undoubtedly wrong,
He perhaps will relieve you, and slay them en masse:
In St. Giles's he'll, doubtless, find plenty to do,
But St. Giles's and James's are not far between,
So keep close your windows, or perhaps he'll leap through;
The wind has swift pinions,—you know what I mean.

IV.

In your gilded saloons, you have scarce given heed To the harrowing wail from vile alley and den;

"Brother's keepers?"—"Concern for our fellows in need?"—

"And wherefore in sooth?"—Dear incredulous Cain! Haggard Want in its dirt may take care of itself,

Though the Guest that is coming, with Death for his mate.

May grinningly whisper to Power and Pelf
The lesson that "All men are brothers," too late!
August, 1865

ODE

ON THE VISIT OF THE FRENCH FLEET TO PORTSMOUTH.

T.

Wake the loud song to hail this Jubilee!

Harp of my country, be not silent now;

No cry of battle breaks thy rest, but vow

Of amity pealing across the sea:

For no death-dealing work to-night, I trow, These heavy guns make such loud revelry!

II.

Where, all aglow, lie the illumined fleets, Cannon to cannon the deep sound repeats, And England, France—France, England gaily greets.

The festive rockets flash on high Their long bright streamers to the sky, While, on the shore, the gathered crowd; Makes the night-air with plaudits loud;

And where the flags festoon the streets, A myriad trophied lamps outpour

Their vari-coloured brilliant rays,
As though the Port were all ablaze,
Mart, store and pier, and roof and tower,
For joy of so august an hour.

III

For lo! for fifty happy years,

The nations twain have been at peace,
At rest their mutual feuds and fears,

Oh, may their friendship never cease!

While now their gallant sailors, o'er
The wine, exchange the mutual pledge!
Be blunted, and for evermore.

The jealous sword's keen edge!
And when another fifty years
Have vanished with their smiles and tears,
When we have long lain in the mould,
May those who follow us behold,—
(The glad and grateful witnesses)—
Another Jubilee like this!

IV.

O Thou, who camest to bring Peace on Earth,
Good will to men, preserve our nations still
Of one accord! May no breath of Ill-will
E'er nurse the elements of War to birth!
But hand in hand, of nations in the van,
May we still point the onward path of Man!
From envy pure, and pure from selfish greed,
Till the whole world of nations shall be freed,
In one alliance bound;—no longer need
For armed fleet or bristling fort, but o'er
This world of ours, from sister shore to shore,
Peace shall her harvests reap and War shall be no

August, 1865.

LINES.

WRITTEN WHEN THE REMAINS OF DR. LIVINGSTONE WERE BROUGHT HOME TO ENGLAND FOR BURIAL.

Ir was not thus we thought to welcome him,
Our great explorer of the Afric wilds,
From those barbaric regions home returned.
We looked some happier greeting to accord;
Within our halls to science consecrate,
Surrounded by our sages, to acclaim
His presence in our midst, his voice. Once more
To gaze upon his manly face, and mark
His noble eye lit up with kindling flame,
As in our ears he told his tale of toil
Endured, and danger braved, and purposed task

Achieved, and the Great River won at length Her secret to unwomb: it might not be! The Lord of All had willed it otherwise, Arresting him in yonder poisonous swamp. Snatching him from our praise, who not for praise But duty cared, and lifting high his soul, In Heaven to wear her duty's radiant crown.

Alas for us! The bark that nears our shores Brings not the living hero, brings alone His ashes for their burial. Never rites Were paid to truer hero-dust than his. What though no martial banner o'er him waved. No sword or spear he wielded, no command To slay, sack, burn and pillage passed his lips, Not less he lived a soldier, soldier died, Laden with conquest, victor to the last, He was a conqueror in the grandest sense, Triumphant upon many a battle field Nobler than ever rang with shouts of war, Who braved the terror of the jungle, braved The peril of the desert, braved the heat Of fever-gendering climate, torrid suns; Defied the breath of pestilence, defied Thirst, hunger, fierce wild beasts, and fiercer men To turn him from his bold self-chosen path Of dauntless search, defied, and e'er, till now, When God had need of him elsewhere, o'ercame. O'ercame by hardy persevering toil, Indomitable courage every bar Opposing Nature raised: o'ercame the hearts In savage human bosoms by his own, Skilled in all tact and Christian graciousness.

He hath not left his like: all honour to him! Tis meet his mortal relics should repose In the great mausoleum of our land, Where sleep the ashes of our reverend dead. Open the Abbey gates and give him room, (Tis all is left us now!) and shrine him high Among his peers, whose memory shall survive On History's tablets with the noblest there! Among the bards who poured their music out In deathless strains, and patriots who upraised Their voices to conserve our liberties,

And gallant warriors who, their country's fame, Loved more than life, and sages who explored The mine of thought to glean immortal truths. And all who in sepulchral honour lie Within these hallowed precincts, all their work For us and ours accomplished, let him rest To abide the Resurrection of the just; And carve the record of his name and worth, That future generations, as they tread The pavement of this shrine, may pause and yield The tribute-tear to David Livingstone.

1873.

A GREETING.

TO THE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER, ON THE PUBLICATION OF ITS FIRST NUMBER.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF ITS EDITOR.

You ask me for some lines of friendly greeting, Because you know in versing I delight; Full readily I yield response, though weeting Small worth pertaineth to the things I write.

I greet you! As I hail each true endeavour
To bring more nigh to men the destined day
When hate, fraud, greed, and guile shall cease for ever,
And love o'er all shall bear resistless sway.

I love your noble name of INDEPENDENT;
It hath a glamour from the years of Eld,
What time fair Freedom's star rose in the ascendant,
And our great forefathers the tyrants quelled.

I greet you! For I recognise the spirit,

The manly tone that through your Programme runs,
It doth the old Puritanic ring inherit—

The fire that stirred our sires still warms their sons.

I greet you! For I feel your mission needed; Huge lies remain to be thrust down and slain, Vast fields of Hope and Promise to be weeded, Tilled, and made ready for the precious grain. Unfurl your sails! Forth on your high embassage! Dreading nor wind's uproar, nor tempest's force. My warm desires attend you on your passage, And my prayers beg for you a prosperous course.

But if (though Heaven forefend!) nought should avail your

Good energies upon this venture cast, Remember that what here men oft call failure God will pronounce true triumph at the last. September, 1890.

A HYMN.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE REV. H. S. GRIFFITHS
OF GAINSBOROUGH, TO BE SUNG AT THE DEDICATION OF
THE PROPOSED "JOHN ROBINSON" MEMORIAL CHURCH
IN THAT TOWN.

T.

FATHER! to Thee this fane we raise,
In memory of a sainted soul;
His mind was free, his heart was whole.
Be Thine the praise!

H.

His witness to the Truth and Right
Abides, a quenchless day-beam shed
Upon us, from the Fountain-Head
Of Heaven's own light.

III.

No menaces of hostile Power
Availed with him, to hold back aught
Thy Word disclosed, or bind his thought
Enchained an hour.

IV.

And for his latest testament,

He bade us keep an open mind,
Assured the wealth Thy Word enshrined

Might ne'er be spent.

V.

For him, and all who like him prest, Before us, toward the mark, be told Our God's high praises, while we hold Their memories blest!

VI.

Their names and record are on high,
A living force to drive far hence
Each sacerdotal vain pretence,
And priest-wrought lie.

VII.

Oh may their mantle on us fall!

And may Thy Grace our souls endue,
That we may live our lives as true,
And free from thrall!

VIII.

And from this house we build for God, Long may the Glory of the Lord Shine out, and His victorious Word Sound forth abroad;

IX.

Battling with Error, Vice and Sin, Casting down every evil thing Abhorred of God, till Christ shall bring His Kingdom in!

March, 1893.

Domestic Pieces.

A BIRTHDAY ODE.

Emma, it is thy birthday; and, this morn,
I would enrich thee, in thy happy bower,
With some sweet tribute tremulously torn
From the high shrine of song, some votive flower
To deck the alter of the heart a dower.

To deck the altar of the heart, a dower

Affection doubly to endear: my lay

I deem indeed too poor for this rich hour; But thou wilt count it worthy; thou wilt say, It breathes a genial thought that cannot pass away.

I sing not for the world; oh, not for them

These thoughts a genial garb may seem to wear!

They would these gentle dreamings all contemn,

Falling too like a mockery on the ear

Alone familiar with the carking care
Of gold, and sounds that never soar above
The market's selfish chilling atmosphere;
Not for the world, but thee, this chaplet wove

Not for the world, but thee, this chaplet wove Of flowers that glow with tints of never-dying love.

For our deep love, my darling, cannot fade,
And its pure glories never may depart:
Rich with the hues of Heaven, its home is made
In the wide chambers of the Eternal Heart.
Ah! Here the hand of Time can have no part:

Love laughs at all the ravage of the years;
His hours outlive the centuries of Art,
His moments are immortal, and he bears
Bliss in his wildest woe, Eden even in his tears.

The thrones and palaces of Earth decay,
The high-imagined works of Genius fade,
Kingdoms and stablished empires pass away
Before the might of Death, even as the shade
Chased by the sunbeam from the summer glade;

But Love is boundless, free and unconfined,
O'er change and tempest smiling undismayed;
For Love, true Love, is of the heart and mind,
And in the flight of Time leaves even Death behind.

Such Love is ours, a love of large increase,
And as he wanders up the mountain heights,
Along a pathway of perpetual peace,
He gathers still fuller and fresh delights.
Far overhead glimmer the lonely lights;
Below lie, sheathed in many a leafy dell,
Cottage and homestead; and the lazy nights
Creep on; the birthdays pass; but all is well

1854.

TO MY FATHER.

Where love is, though his music be a passing bell!

O Muse, at whatsoe'er Pierian spring Fed with the flowing tide of Poesy, Within my heart thy habitation make, And fire me, whileas, at Affection's shrine Bowed, I attempt, in high and measured strains, To sing in tribute verse a Father's praise.

And thou my Father to my filial song
Give ear, and kindly, as is e'er thy wont,
Receive these breathings of thy son's esteem.
For oftimes wandering amid Memory's maze,
The vision of my early days comes back,
And sweet remembrance of my childhood shaped
By Fancy's mystic hand reblossoms fair,
Within the glowing gardens of my thought.
Dear days! What time upon thy parent knee
I sat and prattled out, unchecked, uncurbed,
My childish thoughts, and from thy beaming eye,
Where deepest love and tenderness made home,
Won ever and anon thy fondest smiles.

Ah, days that Memory renders doubly dear! When thou wert wont to lead me by the hand, And ramble out among the woods and fields, And down the green and pleasant country-lanes,

By lawn and lea and marge of wandering stream, And teach me many things in language meet For boyish thought to comprehend. For aye Those lovely landscapes pictured in my brain Will lie, an unexhausted fount of song, And deep delight for all the years to come.

Oh, what a kind solicitude was thine!
And what a debt of love I owe thee, debt
That never can be cancelled all! Thy care,
Thy guidance, all that thou couldst give thou gavest
To make me what I should be, upright, true,
Noble and generous, void of all offence
To God and to my kind, and still I saw
The perfect pattern in thy blameless life.

In Youth my best adviser thou, and oh! How well with all my wayward fancies, and Tenderly hast thou borne. For not in thee A harsh unbending tutor have I found, But from thy lips even reproof itself Came winged with accents of unshaken love. Oh Father, Friend! Fond Father and best Friend! How much I love and venerate thee, not These faltering lines can tell. Emotions deep Of filial love come thronging over me, And choke all utterance, melt me into tears, And bid my unharmonious measures cease.

1856.

MY OWN FIRESIDE.

When the long summer glories at Even are seen, With purple and amber adorning the scene, How sweet in the meadows and vallies to rove, And pour out my heart to the woman I love! But when winter nights darken and winter winds blow, And the thick clouds are falling in tissues of snow, I desire in no happier bliss to abide, Than the household delights of my Own Fireside.

My own Fireside! There's no dearer on Earth; How happy the warmth that burns o'er the hearth! How happy am I, when I hear the loud blaze, As I read, poring over some book of old days,

A tale of affection or love-poem to her Who sits at her work in the old easy-chair, The woman I led to the altar a bride. For an angel of love cheers my own Fireside.

My own fireside! What though troubles may come, So they leave me the light of the hearth of my home, And my books and my wife, I dread not their ill, For I know I shall then be a happy man still: Let others go seeking the joys that await On Fashion, and sense and the smiles of the great; I laugh at their riot and pity their pride, In the quiet content of my own fireside.

1855.

TO MY WIFE

ON HER BIRTHDAY.

I.

It is a bright and golden August morn,
The lark is singing in the unclouded sky,
And on the slopes the sheaves of pilëd corn
Nod to the breeze that wanders idly by;
All things around us are alive with joy,
And joy is bounding in this heart of mine,
For 'tis thy birthday, Emma, and I try,
As is my wont, a votive wreath to twine
Of Fancy's flowerets culled in realms of song divine.

II.

As fair a morning brightened o'er the scene
That sweet Spring time, and trees were budding
forth,
Robed in a livery of infant green

Robed in a livery of infant green,

And the March wind came whistling from the

North,

And the clear song of re-awakened Earth
Told of the Winter past, when first with thee
Amid the fields I strolled, my heart gave birth
To new and strange emotions, flower and tree,
And bird and sunshine seemed to sing of love to me.

III.

Some thirty happy moons have waned since then,
And yet it seems as 'twere but yesterday;
So few of cares have pressed upon my brain,
So many beauties brightened round my way,
Making the months one long perpetual May,
Since I have called thee by the name of wife;
For thou hast cast a warmer gentler ray
Upon my path, with love and rapture rife,
Making for me indeed a Paradise of Life.

IV. I know thy truth and well thy worth I prize,

Thy love surpassing wealth of gold or gem;
Dowered with the largess of thy lustrous eyes,
I would not change it for a diadem,
Nor highest, proudest meed of earthly fame.
And what though Age and Time must steal away
Thy youthful bloom, I know that still the same
Thy love will flourish, baffling all decay,
As sweet, as strong, as pure as peerless as to day.

\mathbf{v}

What though each robber year, as it departs,
Despoil thy beauty of some radiant hue,
Time hath no power to put asunder hearts
That beat to Love and God and Nature true.
Age cannot rob thine intellectual brow
Of its clear truth, thy lips of tenderness,
Thy spirit of its calm celestial glow,
Thy heart of Love; and so he leave thee these,
Leave thee thy noble soul, my love can ne'er grow less.

VI.

Oh! 'tis an everlasting love! O'er Faith
Like ours no force, no sway bath envious Time;
Beyond the range of years, the reign of Death,
'Twill burn as now a star for aye undim,
Watched over by the spotless seraphim
In Heaven's crowned citadel, where Love's high home
Is reared in glory endless and sublime;
And we beyond the portals of the tomb,
Twined hand in hand as now our Father's land shall
roam,

VII.

"Ah! take, dear heart, the imperfect gift I bring,"
The little garland I have here entwined
To welcome in the day, an offering
Of tribute with unskilful art designed
I fear, and scarcely worthy to be shrined
Within the temple of thy heart; and yet,
I know, as thou art ever fond and kind,
Thy smile more dear than fame will welcome it;
"Go little tribute song kneel at thy sovereign's feet!"

August 27th, 1856.

WHILE THOU ART BY MY SIDE.

T.

The dreams of youth are flown away,
The idols of my early years,
And eager hopes that once burned bright
Have long been quenched in tears;
Flowers that have withered neath my touch,
Too fair and lovely to abide;
But still, the path of life is sweet,
While thou art by my side.

II.

And friends that erst I loved are dead,
Are dead or else grown cold to me,
The friends who joined my boyish sports,
Who shared my childish glee.
And some have long departed hence,
Across the ocean wild and wide;
Yet life is very dear to me,
While thou art by my side.

III.

And bitter disappointment oft
Hath met my high and cherished aim;
And idle proved the ardent strife
Of the young heart for fame;
And many a sorrow have I known,
Much have I been to Grief allied;
Yet Life hath many blisses left,
While thou art by my side.

IV.

Oft, when the malice of the world
Hath made the unbidden tear to start
Within mine eyes, and envious tongues
Have pained this throbbing heart,
To thee for comfort have I turned,
For consolation ne'er denied;
A blessed thing is life to me,
While thou art by my side.

 \mathbf{v}

My gentle wife! So envious Time
But leave me thine affection still,
Methinks my bosom well can bear
The weight of every ill;
For dear to me thou art, as dear
As when thou first becamest a bride;
And Life hath many an Eden glow,
While thou art by my side.

1856.

BIRTHDAY STANZAS.

TO M. A. M.

Again the flying year brings round
The happy birthday season,
I haste to welcome in the hour
With rhyme, if not with reason.

Alas! For Time is swift of wing, And bears the moments from us; While we stand by the seasons die, Nor half fulfil their promise.

Yet will not I my verse employ
In strains of moody sorrow,
But gay to-day will chase away
All grief until the morrow.

Sure God hath given one day from Heaven, Unblent with melancholy; And this sweet day, each year alway, Affection claimeth wholly. Thy birthday Aunt! then will I chant
For thee a song of joyance,
Nor Sorrow's brood shall here intrude
To fill us with annoyance.

But kindest wishes, o'er and o'er, Expressed with true affection, Shall fill all other days for thee With fondest recollection.

God shield thee dear one and enrich
Thy life with every blessing,
And evermore may'st thou be found
Thy present peace possessing.

Oh! ne'er may care with dark hand here
Create a day's confusion;
Be thine the rose without the thorn,
And flowers in fair profusion.

And when Age comes, as come it must, Oh! may it bring no burden; But beauteous be thine almond-tree, Gifted with glorious guerdon.

And when thy days on earth shall cease.
Soft breathe the balmy Even,
The herald of thy deathless morn
Among the saints in Heaven.

March 7th, 1856.

TO MY FATHER

ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

The Autumn sun is gold o'er all the land,
The Autumn leaves are mellowing to the fall,
The God of Autumn yields on every hand
His bounteous gifts, and smileth over all.
Autumn! 'Tis Nature's great high festival,
The crowning glory of the flying year;
Pile high the sheaves, and from the laden wall
Gather the purple clusters, far and near,
Be the glad rites observed with plenty and good cheer.

The year is waning. Ah! how grand he seems, Fronting the setting sun right regally! He takes the cup in hand, brimful of dreams, And drinks the golden Autumn-wine of joy; And loud the songs of harvest-home rise high; Autumn is ever grand! And now, fond charm! There is a double Autumn; and I try, This birthday hour, while sitting there so calm Crowned with worth thou art, to tune a tribute psalm.

What grateful tribute can affection bring
To twin affection? I am weak. Ah me!
And when I would of all thy goodness sing,
This bosom is too full, and cannot be
Aught but a silent singer. Oh, to thee
What debt is due, which I can ne'er repay,
Save with this overflowing Memory,
That echoes with that lingering infant day
When thy fond cares were mine!—O wanderer! where
away?

I seem to be again the tender child,
What time I sat upon thy parent knee
And prattled oft of fancies strange and wild,
And thou wouldst smile and kiss and fondle me.
Or else thy little bird of company,
Thy constant hand in hand, for ever near.
Oh! what sweet lingering thoughts rush over me,
That scarce I can restrain the bursting tear,
The tear of gratitude to thee, O Father dear!

Father and Friend! True friend, I know thee well, Oh might I live as brave a life as thine, As true to God and man, and ever dwell
In such a peaceful calm of thought what mine Of wealth it were! what ray of the divine!
And at my Autumn time sit grand as thou!
Come Father, let me pledge thee in the wine Undying love and duty, rendering now,
And still for aye, due honour to that noble brow!

TO MRS. H. E. M. ON HER BIRTHDAY.

Though coldly shines the winter sun This heart is warm within, Affection strikes the sounding strings, A tribute-song to win.

A song by love and hope inspired
To tell that thou art dear,
And dear the day that brings to thee
Another happy year.

Oh! may it be for thee a year
With richest blessings crowned;
May flowerets bloom about thy path,
And peace and joy abound.

Peace that the world can ne'er bestow,
The world can ne'er destroy;
And God's approving smile that gives
A bliss without alloy.

Nor one alone, but many years Of happiness be thine, And many Sabbath-birthdays dowered With Love and Grace Divine.

And ever as the flying time
Brings round thy natal morn,
May wreaths of song like this be twined,
The season to adorn.

Until, at length thy journey done,

To thee it shall be given,

To wear a glorious crown and tune

A better song in Heaven.

February 7th, 1858.

Translations.

GOD.

FROM THE PERSIAN OF JELALEDDIN.

COULD I without Him live but for a day, I should repent that I had lived an hour: In solitude He reaches out His Hands Towards mine, His gifts uplifted to implore, And lo! I tread the world beneath my feet.

1880.

THE DEATH OF ADONIS.

FROM THE GREEK OF BION.

I.

I wail Adonis! Love take up the wail!
Beautiful Adon, on the mountains lying;
His white thigh with a white tusk wounded; pale
With grief, despairing Venus views him dying,
And all the air is full of her sad sighing.
See, from the snow-white flesh the dark blood flows,
From his dear veins the heart-warm current flying,
And underneath his clear and arching brows
His deep blue eyes are set, in stiff and dread
repose.

II.

Thence the warm smiles for ever have departed,
And from his rose-hued lips the colour flies,
The lips she loved so. Venus passionate-hearted,
Well may she utter forth her piteous sighs;
For from those lips even the dear kiss dies,
That thrilling kiss, ah, can she e'er forego?
Though breathless now in death and cold he
lies,

'Tis sweet to press them still amidst her woe, But answering kiss for kiss he ne'er can yield her now.

III.

Alas, alas! Her Adon is no more!
Soon as she saw the wide and gaping wound,
And the dark sanguinary tide outpour,
She cast herself in anguish on the ground,
And her fair arms embracingly around
His pale corse flung;—"Dear Adon yet remain,
Oh, stay but yet, that for the last time drowned
In ecstacy of love, these arms may strain

IV.

Thy form to mine, these lips may mix with thine again!

Afar thou fliest to the dismal realm,
Where hateful Pluto keeps his court. Ah me!
Unhappy that I am, whom griefs o'erwhelm,
Of heavenly birth, I cannot follow thee.
Farewell my Adon, mine no more to be:
O Proserpine, take him to thy bower,
Far happier thou than I! 'tis mine to see
All beauty glide to thee, all joy, all power,
And I am left alone to mourn my perished flower.

v

Thou diest Adon; oh, thrice-wished for! thou
My sole desire, art vanished like a dream;
With thee, my charmed zone is perished now.
Oh! wherefore overbold didst thou misdeem
Thine was the hunter's part? The morning beam
Was not more beautiful than thou; oh! why
'Mong beasts of prey didst peril that fair frame?
Why rashly eager to the chase didst hie?"—
Thus Venus wailed, and Love re-echoed every sigh.

Thus Venus wailed, and Love re-echoed every sigh.

VI.

Alas, alas! Her Adon is no more!

As many pearly tears she shed, as he
From his white thigh did drops of blood outpour;

And where they fell, the Earth all pityingly

Transformed them into fairest flowers that be.
His blood gave birth to the warm blushing rose,

And 'neath her tears the white anemone
Upsprang; nor is there any flower that blows
Besides, to tender lovers' hearts more dear than those.

38.

TO THE EVENING STAR.

FROM THE GREEK OF BION.

HAIL, Evening Star! thou golden light of lovely Aphrogene; Hail, Hesper! sacred ornament of the cerulean night! Thy dear loved light, though fainter than the moon's soft silvery sheen.

As much beyond all other stars, shines eminently bright:

Light me, as, to my shepherd, I a merry-making go;

For the new moon, that rose to-day, is now already set:

I am no thief, nor do I seek the lonely traveller's woe,

I love! and thy light, star of love, the lover aye should get.

1869.

LOVE RESISTLESS,

FROM THE GREEK OF BION.

GENTLE, Cyprus-born Goddess, daughter of Zeus and the Ocean!

Why, against gods and men, doth anger thy sweet bosom move?

Nay, but too feebly expressive are words of thy bitter emotion,

Thy hatred, else why didst thou ever give birth to cruellest Love?

Love, ah! plague of Earth! whose breast ne'er felt pity upstarting,

Fell and foul of mind, that belieth his beautiful shape; Why hast thou lent him his wings, and made him an archer far-darting,

So that none living might ever, his arrows envenom'd, escape?

1869.

RUNAWAY CUPID.

FROM THE GREEK OF MOSCHUS.

I.

FAIR Venus one day went seeking her son,
Her fugitive son, of Love the young lord,
And cried,—"In the highways has any one seen
My truant? O tell me, and win the reward!
From the rose-lips of Venus the dearly prized kiss;
But whoe'er brings him back shall have far more than this.

II.

He's a marvellous child, 'mong a score you might know him:

His complexion not white, but like fire; and his eyes Are piercing and keen; and his heart very cruel;

But softer and sweeter than honey his voice; For his speech is beguiling and smooth, and belies His untameable heart;—the most guileful of boys.

III.

Like the sunbeam the ringlets adorning his head;

His face is audacious; his hands, though but small,

The fiercest of darts throw with skill e'en as far

As the Stygian realms and the king of them all:

His body is naked, but shrouded his mind;

And he flies here and there, like a bird on the wind:

IV.

From maidens to youths and from youths back to maids,
And ever behind leaves a pang in their hearts;
For his bow is well-bent, and he shoots to the skies,
Wounding goddesses even, and gods with his darts;

On his back a well-filled golden quiver he bears, And even to wound his own mother oft dares.

V.

Ah cruel!—But still worse; with his torch has this urchin Made with love even Phœbus himself raging hot; So if thou shouldst find him, just bind him, and bring him; Oh bind him, and bring him, and pity him not; And though he should weep, let his sorrow not grieve thee, His tears are all false and but meant to deceive thee.

VI.

And if he should smile on thee, seize him! and if
He offers his red lips to kiss thee, oh tarry,
Nor kiss him, for poison is under his lips!
And if he should say take these weapons I carry,
You may have them a present, beware the young liar,
Nor touch them at all, they are all tipt with fire!
1858.

T862.

THE CHOICE.

FROM THE GREEK OF MOSCHUS.

When softly the breeze o'er the waters is stealing,
Scarce ruffling a ripple, 'tis pleasant to me,
From the spirit's wild tumult of thought and of feeling
To find a repose on the broad tranquil sea.
But when the winds roar and the billows are raging,
Affrighted I turn from the dark rolling brine,
To earth and her green woods, where sweet and engaging,

The wind like a minstrel sings loud in the pine.

An ill lot is his whose home's on the ocean,
Whose toil 'mid the dangers that visit the deep;
Be it mine, far away from the storm's wild commotion,
Beneath the wide plane, in luxurious sleep,
To lie, or, half dosing, immersed in calm dreams,
To list to the murmur of neighbouring streams.

CAPRICIOUS LOVE.

FROM THE GREEK OF MOSCHUS.

Pan loved the neighbouring Echo, but the maid
Turning from him, pursued the dancing Satyr;
For Lyda's loving smile the Satyr prayed,
But passion-wild, in vain did woo and flatter;
As Pan loved Echo, she with love beheld
The Satyr, he loved Lyda, so by turns
Within each breast a fruitless passion burns,
Each loved repelling, loving is repelled.
Be warned, all ye whose hearts are yet unplighted,
Lest loving thus, your love be thus requited.

LOVE BENIGHTED.

FROM THE GREEK OF ANACREON.

At the hour of midnight dreary, When Arcturus drives the weary Bear towards his western setting, And the busy tribes of men, Overcome with toil are sleeping;
Love benighted came a weeping
At my gates, and loudly knocking

my gates, and loudly knocking Made the silence ring again.

"Who," said I, "my dreams dispelling, Breaks the stillness of my dwelling?"

"Be not fearful," then he answered,

"I am but a little child,

And implore your kindly shelter,

From these drenching rains that pelter; Have compassion on a wanderer

Through the moonless midnight wild."

Having heard, and moved to pity By his sad and plaintive ditty,

Straight my chamber lamp I kindled, And my doors I opened wide:

Lo! a little child before me, Clad with wings as with a glory,

In his hand a bow, and quiver
Full of arrows at his side.

By my hearthstone, burning brightly, Having seated him, I lightly

Took and warmed his hand in mine,

And wrung the moisture from his hair;

Looking then from arch brows under, "Let us try my bow, I wonder

If the bowstring has been injured,"—
Said he, and with sprightly air,

Drew an arrow from his quiver, And he shot me through the liver

Like a gadfly, and upleaping,

Loudly laughed and said again,

With his red lip curling at me,—
"Dear mine host! congratulate me!

My bow is indeed uninjured, But thy heart will feel the pain!"

ON WOMAN.

FROM THE GREEK OF ANACREON.

When Nature, with a lavish hand, Dispensed her gifts o'er all the land, To every creature in his turn,

1858.

She gaved the bull his curved horn, His proud hoofs to the prancing steed, To the swift hares their nimble speed, Fins to the tenants of the deep,

To birds the light and aëry wing, And his dark yawning cave of teeth To the ferocious forest-king:

To man she gave the martial pride,

The courage strong to dare and strive;

But when it came to woman's turn,

She knew no longer what to give.

Oh, then on Woman she bestowed

Oh, then on Woman she bestowed
The richest royallest gift of all,
Beauty, beneath whose killing glance

The proud, the brave, the strong must fall;

For mightier far than steel or fire,

Are Beauty's sweet and witching wiles; 'Tis woman vanquishes the heart,

And slays the strongest with her smiles.

1858.

ORPHEUS.

FROM THE LATIN OF VIRGIL.

FROM THE GEORGICS, LIBER IV.: 464-525V.

"Ipse cava solans ægrum testudine amorem

Eurydicen toto referebant flumine ripæ."

HE, with the hollow shell, his utter woe Soothed, as he sang, upon the lonely shore, At day-dawn and at sunset, still of thee, Dear wife, the unceasing song.

Yea! and the jaws

Of Tænarus, and the wide-yawning gate
Of Pluto, and the grove with horror black
He entered: to the infernal shades he went,
And their dread king, and to that heart appealed,
Which ne'er before melted at human prayer.
Forth, started by his song, from deepest den
Of Erebus its spectral tenants trooped,
In number countless, as the birds which cower
Among the leaves when chased from off the hills,

On wintry evening, by the driving rain:
Mothers and husbands, and the phantom forms
Of high-souled heroes, boys and girls unwed,
And youths who had, while as their sires looked on,
Been borne to death: round whom the inky ooze
Of Cocytus, and the dank loathsome reeds
And sluggish waters of the hateful tarn,
And Styx enwind their ninefold chains, and bind
Them prisoners.

Fell a charm on that abode Of death, and on the deeps of Tartarus, And on the Furies, the blue snakes entwined Amid their locks: with his three mouths agape Stared Cerberus, while on its axle staved, In spell-bound slumber, Ixion's rolling wheel. Now, homeward travelling, every ill escaped, And to his prayer given back, Eurydice Behind him following close (Persephone Had willed it so) already felt the first Vibrations of the freer air of heaven; When sudden frenzy seized the thoughtless swain. A fault to be forgiven could hell forgive! He paused—was not Eurydice his own? He treads the threshold of the day, and lo! The stern decree forgot, alas! his soul Vanquished, he casts on her a backward glance.

That instant, all his pains like water spilt, Cancelled the bond of the unpitying king, And thrice, through all Avernus' dismal deeps, Echoed the vollied thunders.

Oh! she cried,—
What madness, monstrous madness hath undone
Me, wretched me, thee too, my Orpheus, thee?
Behold once more the cruel doom recalls,
The heavy sleep entombs my tear-brimmed eyes.
And now, farewell, I am borne hence, enwrapt
In night's vast pall, stretching vain hands towards thee,
Alas, no longer thine!

She spake, and swift
From sight, like smoke melting in air, she flew
Another way, nor saw him any more,
Although he ineffectual clutched the shades,
And sought in vain to say a thousand things.
Nor would the Orcan ferryman allow

Again to cross the pool. What should he do? Ah! whither turn, a second time bereaved? With what fresh music melt the nether gods? For she, already cold in death, and borne In Stygian boat, was floating far away, Seven months, they tell, beneath a skyward rock, Seven months, in all, by Strymon's lonely wave, Among the wintry caverns he made moan, Disclosing his sad tale in strains that soothed The tiger and uprooted the firm oak His steps to follow: so the nightingale Her stolen brood wails in the poplar shade, Torn from the nest unfledged, when by rude clown Espied: all night she sobs among the boughs, Repeating o'er and o'er her piteous notes, And with her plaints fills all the land about.

His soul, nor Queen of Love, nor spousal rites
Could win: alone, o'er Hyperborean ice,
Snowy Tanais, fields whose nuptial tie
Not even by Rhipæan frosts is riven,
He roamed, grieving for lost Eurydice
And Pluto's forfeit bond; his constancy
Counted for scorn by the Ciconian dames,
Who, on a night of sacrifice to heaven,
And Bacchanalian revels, limb from limb
'Tore him, and strewed his relics o'er the plain.
E'en then, as from the marble neck the head
Rent, in mid-stream floated adown the flood
Of the Æagrian Hebrus, still the tongue
With its last lingering life "Eurydice"
Kept crying—"Ah! my poor Eurydice!"
"Eurydice," the echoing banks replied.

1872.

THE PROŒMION TO VENUS.

FROM THE LATIN OF LUCRETIUS.

DE RERUM NATURA, LIBER I., 1-21.

"Eneadum genetrix, hominum divomque voluptas,

Efficis ut cupide generatim swcla propagent."

MOTHER of Romans! Joy of men and gods! Kind Venus! who beneath the gliding signs Of heaven, dost populate the fruitful fields

And the ship-bearing sea: for every kind Of living creatures is conceived by Thee, And springing forth upon the sunlight looks. Thee, goddess, thee winds fly and thy approach The clouds of Heaven; for thee the dædal earth Her pleasant flowers displays, the wide waves laugh, And the calm azure beams diffusive light. For soon as shows the Spring her smiling face, And the West-Wind set free blows blythe and bland, First, winged things of air, thee Goddess, tell, And of thy coming, heart-stirred by thy power; Next, the wild flocks frisk o'er the bounteous meads, And swim the rapid streams; and all that live Won captive by thy wiles and blandishments, Where'er thou leadest, fondly follow thee; Till throughout seas and mountains, hungry floods, And bowery homes of birds and green champaigns, Thou stirring with soft love the breasts of all Dost make them eagerly to spread their kind.

188o.

THE SUN.

FROM THE LATIN OF LUCRETIUS, LIBER V., V. 282, 283.

THE Sun, that teeming source of liquid light Which laves the heavens with brightness ever new.

1880.

ODE TO FUSCUS.

FROM THE LATIN OF HORACE, LIBER I: ODE XXII.

HE needs nor Moorish lance, nor bow,
Nor quiver lined with many a dart,—
Fuscus!—within whose breast doth glow
A guileless, pure and upright heart.

Whether where Syrtes raging foams, Or 'mong the inhospitable snows Of high Caucasian ridge he roams, Or where Hydaspes fabled flows.

For wandering in the Sabine wood, Singing of Lalage, unarmed, A fierce wolf in my pathway stood, But turned and fled my steps, alarmed. Such monster, in their deep recesses, Not war-like Daunia's forests hide, Nor Juba's arid wildernesses Where the grim lion wanders wide.

Place me in regions where no tree
Makes glad the golden summer-time,
Or where the Storm-god furiously
Rolls the black tempest o'er the clime;

Place me beneath a torrid sun, In homeless land beyond the sea, Still shall my numbers gaily run, Loved by my laughing Lalage!

1862.

FRANCESCA OF RIMINI.

FREELY RENDERED IN TERZA RIMA, FROM THE ITALIAN OF DANTE, L'INFERNO, CANTO V.

Bard,—I began,—I do desire to speak

Together with yon pair who toward us fly
So fleet upon the wind. He answered:—Seek

Then as they near us to address thy cry
Adjuring them by that love which doth bear
Them onward; they will come to us.—Then I

Thus called to them, as the wind brought them near:—
O weary spirits, if no power forbid,
Come hither, and with us your converse share!

As doves, whom some fond wish invites, with speed Do spread their wings, cleaving the air, while home They voyage to their nest, those spirits did,

Urged by strong love, come, speeding thro' the gloom,
From Dido's troop,—so did my cry prevail.
O, kind and gentle one, who thus hast come

To visit, in these realms of woe and wail, Us whom the world imbrued with crimson stain, Were God our Friend, our prayers should never fail

To rise for thee, who lovingly hast ta'en Compassion on our sorrow, whatsoe'er Thou wilt to speak, shall our attention gain, And whatsoe'er thou dost desire to hear That will we tell, if still the boisterous wind, As now, awhile its roaring doth forbear.

The land, where Destiny my birth assigned,
Lies on that shore, where swiftly Po runs down,
His rest amid the ocean-depths to find.

Love which to tender heart is quickly known, Allured him, by that beauteous form, from me So mercilessly rent, that still I moan

My untimely fate; Love, that will never be, By the beloved one, of love denied, Moved me to please him so, as thou dost see

He still remaineth faithful at my side; Love led us to one death,—but Caina waits Our slayer's spirit.—So she sadly sighed

Her words, and pondering o'er their cruel fates,
I downward bent my gaze, and looked so long,
That the Bard cried:—O'er what thus ruminates

Thy mind?—And I replied:—'Ah, cruel wrong!

To this dark doom, by what emotions dear

And tender thoughts have they been lured along?'

Then turning on one side, while they gave ear, I said:—Francesca! Your unhappy lot Fills me with grief and stirs the pitying tear;

But tell me, in your time of joy, by what And how, Love rose to such a height that ye, To know the secret of your hearts, were brought?'

Then she replied:—'Ah, sad the memory,
In time of grief, past gladness to recall,—
That knows thy sapient guide,—yet if in thee

So eager is the wish to know of all Our story, and how passion in us grew, As one who, o'er his tale, his tears lets fall,

I to thy question will give answer true.

One day, full pleasantly, the tale we read
Of Launcelot, and how Love o'er him threw

His magic spell. Alone and free from dread We were, and no suspicion near, and yet As we the tale pursued our eyes were led To interchange soft glances, oft they met Each other sweetly, while our cheeks grew pale.

But in the story, that which did beget

Our fall, was where we read-(Ah! too sweet tale!)—

Of the loved smile and of the rapturous kiss; Then he, who from my side shall never fail,

Pressed his warm lips to mine in trembling bliss; The book and writer both, our secret thought Unveiled to our own view, and after this

We read no more that day !-- While thus she brought The Past in Memory back, her lover groaned So piteously, that the sense of thought

Fled from me for a season, and I swooned Falling, as falls a corpse,—by sympathy o'erwrought. 1864.

SONNET: TO FORTUNE.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF METASTASIO.

Capricious Deity! why thus, in spite,

Dost thou with briers strew my toilsome way? Deem not thy frowns can my bold heart affright,

Or drive me at thy shrine to bend and pray; Keep back thy threatenings for the wretched wight, The crouching slave, who doth thy power obey;

My dauntless soul shall brave thine utmost might, Defying stormiest waves and darkest day.

Oft, when thy fury hath against me urged The winds of adverse fate to do me ill,

My spirit from the fray hath e'er emerged, Armed with a braver, hardier strength of will; Ev'n as the steel, on which the hammer beats,

Brightens beneath each stroke the smith's strong arm repeats.

1863.

SONNET.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF FILICAJA.

EVEN as a mother doth her babes behold. With warm affection beaming in her eye, Her fond arm circles one, one tenderly

She kisses, and a third her lap doth hold,
While by their motions, looks and cries are told
Each want or wish, her answer she makes known
With smile or frown, or voice of meaning tone,
But all still fashioned in Love's tenderest mould;
So o'er us watches God's High Providence,

With an impartial eye that never sleeps,

He hears and helps us, and our footsteps keeps, And if our prayer he grants not, yet far hence Be murmuring thoughts, knowing that each denial Is but designed in Love to put our faith to trial.

1863.

THE SONG OF THE ARCHANGELS.

IN THE PROLOGUE TO FAUST.
FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE.

RAPHAEL.

Among the spheres, in yon blue arch,
The Sun hymns forth his minstrel song,
With thunder, as he rolls along,
Pursuing his predestined march;
His countenance gives the Angels might,
Although to sound his depths of light
Their wisdom fails: God's works shine forth
Glorious as at Creation's Birth.

GABRIEL.

E'en-swifter than an angel's flight,
The green adorned Earth spins round,
Now with an Eden glory crowned,
And now immersed in dreadful Night;
The sea lifts up its foaming waves,
And roars among its rocks and caves;
And with the spheres' eternal motion,
Roll on together rocks and ocean.

MICHAEL.

And storms in emulation roar,
O'er sea and land, and unconfined
In their fierce rage, the planet bind
With chains of operative power;
Before the thunderbolt's wild path
Flames out a lurid-flashing wrath;
Thy servants, Lord! adore Thy sway,
And all the changes of Thy Day!

CHORUS OF THE THREE.

Thy countenance gives Thine angels might, Though none can comprehend Thy Light, And all Thy works with glory shine, As at the first woke by Thy voice Divine!

т862.

THE STORM.

THE GERMAN OF

Angrily the tempest rages, Lashing with his scourge the billows; Leap the waves and foam with fury, Swelling big with life, and heaving High the snow-white watery mountains; And the little ship upclimbs them. Toiling as with strong endeavour, Then leaps downward, on a sudden, In the deep dark sea-abysses.

Sea, O Sea!

Mother of the lovely Foam-born! Grandmother of Eros, spare me! Fluttering o'er us, prey-expectant, Like a spectre, the white sea-bird Whets his beak against the ship-mast, Hungering for my life-blood greedy, Who have hymned thy daughter's praises, And whom that sly rogue, thy grandson, For his gamesome toy hath taken.

Vain my pleading wild entreaties, Heard not 'mid the dreadful tempest, And the wind's loud roar of battle, Roaring, whistling, shricking, howling, Like a crowd of maniacs yelling; And there comes, between the storm-bursts, Music of a lyre enchanting, Witching measures, wildly yearning, Melting all my soul within me, And the sounds I well remember.

Far away, On the rock-bound coast of Scotland. Rises up the old grey castle, Frowning o'er the storm-tost ocean,

At a high and archëd casement, Stands a beauteous love-sick lady, Ghost-like and as pale as marble; On a harp she plays and singeth, And the wild wind waves her tresses, And her song of sorrow beareth O'er the wide storm-troubled ocean.

1869.

SONG.

FROM HEINE'S "NACHTS IN DER CAJÜTE," SLIGHTLY
ALTERED.

THE Heaven hath its host of stars,
Its hidden pearls the sea,
But richer far, this heart of mine
Is filled with love of thee.

The Heavens are wide, the sea is deep,
My heart is vaster far,
And there, a gem, my love is shrined,
Fairer than pearl or star.

O come! thou little youthful maid, To my large heart to-day; For like the sea and the sky, my heart With love is melting away!

1861.

THE WIDOWED LYRE.

IN MEMORY OF J. STANYAN BIGG.

FROM THE FRENCH OF THE CHEVALIER DE CHATELAIN.

PAUSE, gentle traveller, upon thy way!

This lyre that hangs upon the cypress-bough,

Swept by the wings of zephyrs in their play,

Still breathes a tone should stir thy sorrows now.

Alas, 'tis widowed! O'er the lifeless clay
In sounds, like his, that borrowed nought from
Art,

The nightingale already tunes her lay,
A requiem for the Poet of the Heart.

Ah! who shall ever wake for us again
Those cadences with tenderest feeling fraught,
The plaintive song, the sympathetic strain
Which overcame the spell-bound listener's thought?

Where shall we find again, harmonious lyre!

The sweet simplicity, the graceful ease,
The life, the soul which ever did inspire
The genius of thy witching melodies?

No gaudy glitter marred thy moving song,
Which mirrored Nature in her antique youth,
Fresh from the source thy numbers flowed along
And taught us lessons of undying truth.

The Bard who sang of "Night and of the Soul,"
The gentle-hearted minstrel lowly lies;
His soaring spirit, spurning Earth's control,
Now mingles with the choirs of Paradise!

1870.

A FABLE FOR THE YOUNG.

FROM THE FRENCH OF THE CHEVALIER DE CHATELAIN.

On his canvas, an artist, with pencil so true, Had pictured a red rose and violet blue; Deceived by their colours, a butterfly bright And a bee through the air, that was taking his flight Mistook them for flowers, and drew near in haste, With imprudent desire, their sweetness to taste: It cost them their lives, for the humming bee led By the prospect of honey found poison instead; While the paint to the wings of the butterfly clung, And there, till he died, a poor prisoner he hung.

MORAL.

Let the young of deceitful attractions beware! Pleasure often allures alone to ensnare. He only the path of true wisdom pursues, Who controls his desires and his passions subdues.

SONNET.

THE HIGHWAY.

PARAPHRASED FROM THE FRENCH OF GEORGE SAND.

What spot is lovelier than the broad highway,
Winding through hedges green and woods
outspread?

Thither my steps invitingly are led,
'Tis free for all, and owns no lordling's sway!
'Tis mine to shut or open, none may say.

Not only do the rich and powerful tread

Its flowery paths and breathe the perfumes shed

Around; but free is each o'erhanging spray
For the blythe birds to carol out their songs;

And the worn wanderer may his head repose,
Its stones his pillow, and look up and see
A clear blue sky which no dull walls enclose!
The highway, a true land of liberty,
Belongs to him, to whom naught else belongs.

1863.

LINES

ON THE DEATH OF NAPOLEON III.

FROM THE FRENCH OF VICTOR HUGO

O People! be magnanimous and brave;
Bury resentment with him in the grave!
The scent of lifeless carrion ne'er allures
The lion's steps,—the lion's part be yours!
A noble nation's hate should be sublime,
And pardon in his tomb her tyrant's crime.
Alas! what heavy missiles we might throw
At this old man, crushed by tremendous woe,
Who sleeps his last in yonder foreign land.
Ye have put down the mighty! Ah! 'twas grand!
But it becomes you, now, the dead to spare,
Nor can I deem that it were worthy e'er
A Nation, in whom God reflects His Light,
To join to proud revenge the petty spite!

THE POLISH PATRIOTIC HYMN.

AN ENGLISH VERSION.

O LORD, who didst for many ages crown
Our land with pomp of power and glorious fame,
O'er Poland Thy protecting shield was thrown,
When, all her foes, our armies overcame;
At Thy great altar, God, we raise our plea,
Deign to restore our land her liberty!

Touched by the woes born of her bitter wrong,
Thou hast her martyrs by Thy hand sustained;
And given us still to bear our flag among
The nations bravely, and with name unstained.
At Thy great altar, God, we raise our plea,
Deign to restore our land her liberty!

Thou whose eternal justice doth redress
The wrong, and crush the powerful in his pride;
What though our tyrants murder and oppress,
Again be hope with Polish hearts allied.
At Thy great altar, God! we raise our plea,
Deign to restore our land her liberty!

O may the Cross, which oft, in holy hands Upheld, hath been insulted by our foes, Now serve to animate our rallying bands, And prove our constant strength amidst our woes. At thy great altar, God! we raise our plea, Deign to restore our land her liberty!

May the Redeemer, on the Field of death,
Lead on our armies in victorious war;
And wake within each soldier's heart the faith
His Spirit hovers o'er us like a star.
At Thy great altar, God! we raise our plea,
Deign to restore our land her liberty!

In the high name of His commands sublime,
We now go forth as brothers leagued and sworn;
Hasten, O God, our Resurrection time,
With Freedom bless those who in slavery mourn.
At Thy great altar, God! we raise our plea,
Deign to restore our land her liberty!

Give to our Poland back her former glory, Regard the fields drenched with our heroes' blood;

O let the peace, and joy of ancient story, Return to us, remove thy chastening rod. At Thy great altar, God! we raise our plea, Deign to restore our land her liberty!

1863.

Jubenilia.*

THE NUN'S DREAM.

The tempest howls amid the wintry night;

Loud peals the elemental war;

And rushing down the gloomy Alpine height,

The awful avalanche is heard afar.

White massy drifts of snow gleam in the dark,
Winged by the rushing wind, that falls
Along the convent roof in groans, that mark
The dreary intervals.

And the good sisters, who had left the world And bade adieu to care and sin, Prayed "Ave Mary!" as around was hurled The tempest's horrid din.

They calmed their souls with prayer, and heeded not
The elemental strife. They felt
No fear, telling their bead-rolls as they sought
The cells where Quiet dwelt.

And Slumber wrapt them in her peaceful arms,
Saints guarding their repose,
Whose dewy breaths chased all the dread alarms
That gentle sleep oppose.

^{*}The pieces in this Division were all written during the Author's seventeenth and eighteenth years.

For why should Fear disturb their holy rest,
Or mar the raptures of their sweet abode?
There can no terror enter in the breast
Of him who trusts in God.

The nuns lie slumbering fearless of all ill,
And dream of glorious realms above;
Even in dreams the passion stirs them still
Of God's Ethereal love.

But there was one, who, while the raging storm
Held its mad revels, on the cold
Cell floor, kneeling before the imaged form
Of the Madonna, told

Her pious "Aves," and communion held
With angels and with saints;
Vigilant even at night; her frame upheld
By love of God. She pants

To soar beyond this mortal home of flesh
In angel-flight; her breast
Inspired by ardent hopes in regions fresh,
To find perennial rest.

And ever as she prayed and as she soared,
Transparent haloes clothed the head
Of the mild maiden mother of the Lord,
Bright haloes fed

With virgin fire, such as gleams round the throne
Of the Omnipotent, and throws
Its splendour on the empyrean floor, bestrewn
With myriad gems. And glows

Her bosom with new feeling. She expands
Beyond herself, her soul is borne
Far from the realms of earth, in angel hands
Upcaught, and now of all earth's shackles
shorn.

She feels that she is free, free as the light
That filleth day, free as the air
Through which she wings her glad celestial flight,
Her seraph spirit bare

Of mortal shroud and coverlid of clay.

Was it a dream? For at her side

A form angelic, garmented in day,

Whispered, "Terrestrial bride

Of the Eternal, haste away with me,
Beyond the night, beyond the orbs,
Beyond the gateways of the sky, to be

Where purity absorbs

All holy being in Immortal bliss;

Come with me to the rapt abode

Of saints and angels, to be there it is To be the bride of God."

Uprushed the spirit in a meteor flight,

The seraph arms were wound around,

And bore her through the storm, and through the night,

And through Chaotic sound.

They sped through space, they passed the starry clime,

They came where neither rolling orbs,
Nor suns, nor moons appeared; where, bounded
Time.

Eternity absorbs.

Until, at length, they reach Heaven's golden gate;
They pass the bounds of Death; and all the skies

Reveal their thronging myriads who await
To give them welcome into Paradise.

The storm passed by, the wintry morning broke Clearly and chilly through the air,

The pious sisters of the convent woke And found her kneeling there.

In marble stillness kneeling on the floor,

Her white hands folded crosswise o'er her

breast,

For she was dead; the soul had burst its door Of flesh and entered on eternal rest.

1850.

LOVE ABOUNDING.

I HEARD at eve the tender nightingale
Weaving soft melancholies into song,
A song that stirred the silence like a tale
Of long forgotten, long forgiven wrong.

It hushed my heart; Peace! peace thou giddy thing!
And stole oblivion o'er the life of Pain;

So like the ghost of Summer did she sing, That waking memory sank to sleep again.

The spirit of sweet Love suffused each thought
With tenderest breathings from the house of dream,

My grief was as a thing remembered not, So strangely sweet that twilight song did seem.

For Life was folded in wide arms of Love.

And yet for deeper Love my soul did crave,
As a wild boy that scorns his native grove,

As a wild boy that scorns his native grove,
And longs to sail upon the bounding wave.

Love throws a mantle o'er the gloomy hills,

Love plants a floweret on the grave-yard sod,

Ay! all the strings of Being harmonize

To the great love-song of Immortal God.

Oh! who could live a day, were't not that Love
Mid flowery chaplets hides our prison bars?
Reigning on Earth in woods and fields, above
In everlasting blue and trembling stars!

The long eternal record of the years

Breathes but one music, tender, true and strong,

Now full of mirth, now softened into tears,

Two voices but the same undying song.

'Twas Love that called all being into birth,

'Twas Love for whom the bars of gloom were
riven;

'Tis Love shall lamp the pilgrim's path on Earth,
And light him upward to the gates of Heaven!

1850.

THE SEA QUEEN.

T

At night upon the dun damp sand,
All washed with salt and frothy spume,
I stood, and mused of that strange land
That lies in Ocean's deep mid-gloom.

II.

I thought on tales of merry maids, Who prank and play 'mong Ocean halls; Who roam about the coral glades, And hark the mystic waterfalls.

III.

I thought, how sweet untouched by care
Or sense of grief with them to be!—
The broad moon, mounting up the sky,
Seemed stirred with wicked scorn of me.

IV.

Then suddenly she left her place,
She leapt into the waves, and, hark!
A murmur, soft and musical
Comes borne along the dark:—

V

Oh how can a mortal bear such joys?

And how can ever a human ear

Hearken the tones of the Sea-queen's voice,

Nor die with a wild, weird, wondrous fear?

VI.

'Tis the Sea-Queen's hour, she wanders forth, To skirt the bounds of her wide domain; She wanders forth with her numberless train; Oh! the Sea-Queen loves a child of Earth!

VII.

The Ocean murmurs her mystical moan,
And leaps up to be clasped by her Heaven above;
But the Sea-Queen on her coral throne
Sighs for earthly love!

VIII.

Then from the dark wild waves arose
A phosphorescent beam of light;
Then phantom-beautiful arose
A myriad fairy forms. Oh bright

IX.

Were they as morning's rosy dawn!

Oh bright as evening's earliest star!

They trooped above that surgy lawn,

And circled, dancing, round a car

X.

Of silvery lustre: crowned with light,
There sat the Ocean-Queen, and shone
Like some ethereal deity,
On immaterial throne.

XI.

She swayed her sceptre o'er the waves,
And came towards the dun damp sand;
Spell-bound I gazed on her magical form,
Till she beckoned me with her magical hand.

XII.

Her voice like the chime of a silver bell, Trancing my heart, stole over the sea, A little whisper, fairy-charmed, "Come to me."—

XIII.

Like one upcaught in cloudlike hands I seemed, transported to her side; She spake to me of many things:—
And would I have an Ocean-bride?

XIV.

And would I dwell beneath the wave
In rocky caverns deep and wild,
While o'er me the minstrel waters should rave
A sweet strange music of grief beguiled,
Like a dirge of a mad mother over her child?

XV

Ever the same sweet mournful voice, Singing above me through all the years; Here I might fathom Love's deepest joys, Better than smile-blisses, blisses of tears.

XVI.

Yes I must be her Ocean-king,— She gazed so loveful-earnestly, I could not answer anything, But pressed her hand responsively.

XVII.

For the dawn of a new and strange desire

Came flushing like sunrise over my thought,
King of the sea and a fay for my Queen,
Say who could image a happier lot?

XVIII.

Then across the plains of Ocean,
Came a murmur musical,
Came a sound angelical,
Such as sprites in sweet commotion
Wake at Faëry Festival.

XIX.

First but lowly woke the strain,
Then it rose with gradual swell;
Seemed it bliss unutterable,
But a bliss still fraught with pain,
And, as its numbers rolled along,
It took the shape of a nuptial song.

XX.

Let our Ocean-caverns ring
Welcome to our new Sea-King;
Ocean harps pour forth a tide
Of song to greet the royal bride,
Who brings an earthly bridegroom home;
Welcome, welcome! Fairy Welcome!

XXI.

Their's shall be the heaving billow, For a happy nuptial pillow; Their's shall be the frothy foam, For garlands in their marriage-home; And around, below, above The changeless song shall sing of love.

XXII.

Twelve spouting dolphins, two by two,
Were yoked to the Sea-Queen's car,
And as the song's last echo
In dim distance died afar,
They plunged beneath the whelming foam,
The waves like thunders brake
Above us, and the Sea-Queen, then,
In tones of solace, spake:—

XXIII.

Thou art the Sea-King, and we go
To those realms where ever flow
Sweetest tides of ocean-song
In spirit-trancing measure;
And there lies our royal home,
And there we for aye shall roam,
Talking Love's dear words, along
Ocean's winding depths at pleasure.

XXIV.

Scarce I heeded her sweet voice,
For strange terror gathered o'er me;
Yet, methought, I will rejoice,
With these ocean-realms before me.

XXV.

Then it seemed a mystic hand
With mystic finger pointed scorn,
And a voice cried—'Know the land,
That lies beneath old Ocean's gloom!
Kingly throne is kingly tomb,—
Know the land and reign forlorn!

XXVI.

Far down among the billows, Swift as a falling star By the twelve huge spouting dolphins Was borne our royal car.

XXVII.

And wilder grew the surges,
And the billows wilder broke,
And strange mysterious lyres awoke
Unearthly dirges.

XXVIII.

Dirges that aye seemed to rave—
'Welcome to thy ocean-home!
Ocean-home is ocean-tomb,
Nuptial couch is nuptial grave.

XXIX.

Let the dwellers of the deep,

Come forth to welcome their new king;

King of death, and king of sleep,

King of the never-vanishing.'

XXX.

A train of corpses, nude and pale,
Passed before me, one by one;
I turned away my awe-struck gaze—
And lo—my attendant fays were flown.

XXXI.

Behind were slimy mermaids singing, 'King of all the watery graves!'
And around, the moaning waves
Back the echoes wild were flinging,
'King of all the watery graves!'

XXXII.

I grasped the Sea-Queen's proffered hand, I grasped the hand of my Ocean-bride; It had a clammy touch,—I looked,— A nude pale corpse was at my side.

XXXIII.

I felt her cold and pallid arms,
Like dank moist snakes, around me twine,
She clasped me in her dead embrace,
And pressed her lifeless lips to mine.

XXXIV.

Then the train of corpses pale
Glared at each other with wild grimaces,
Whirled them in a giddy dance
And clasped them in obscene embraces.

XXXV.

I could not bear the horrid sight,
I swooned at the feet of my Ocean-bride,
I swooned away as I heard them shriek,—
'The king of the corpses himself hath died!'

XXXVI.

When I awoke to consciousness,
I felt my brow by the cool breeze fanned;
The sun was up in the morning sky;
And I lay outstretched on the dun damp sand.

1851.

ODE TO POESY.

I.

O'ER the never-ceasing throng Of human things, a flame of song Like a royal splendour sits, And between the wearying fits Of Mammon-greed and tyrant-craft, Darts many a swift and subtle shaft Of melody, that steals the heart Of this poor world, allays the smart, Robs it of one half its pain, Soothes the tumult in each vein, Climbeth upwards to the brain; And as the tendrils of the vine Around the regal pine-tree twine, And clothe its trunk in loveliest green, So the power of song doth wean The heart of man.—A hymn to thee, Grandeur-mantled Poesy!

II.

Nature's earliest child wert thou, And on thy ethereal brow The lingering warmth of her first kiss Remains; the light of infant bliss With memories of young thought o'erflows Thy shadowy eyes; the thought that rose Within the mazes of thy soul, Stirring thee, beyond controul Of other than Creative power, To read the mystery of each flying hour. Then within thy natal bower, Poesy thou pouredst forth A song that startled this old Earth From her Chaotic slumbers. Majestic! Fitly celebrated. Then the heavens first vibrated To the throbbing of the stars: Then mad Ocean burst his bars. And like a frenzied poet rushed To feast him with celestial love, And all his tingling being gushed In amorous songs, the while in vain he strove To clasp and kiss voluptuous sky, To revel in her love and in her arms to die.

III.

Sweet were the sighs of the waterfalls, As they rushed forth from their mystic halls, And the windy caves of their mountain-homes, And sped them far 'mong craggy glooms, And the dark ravines and the tombed vales,
Sighs breathed in the ears of the vagrant gales;
And mellow the warblings of the cascades
As they danced like young nymphs along sloping glades,
And toyed and coquetted with all the flowers,
In their hilly haunts and summer bowers;
And mighty the roar of the wild cataracts,
As they foaming rolled down amidst unknown tracts,
And maddened ran whirling round dangerous rocks,
Like maniacs let loose, with white-streaming locks
Behind them still flowing, still twining among
The sharp crags over which their swift footsteps rung.
These brought, O Queen! a flitting dower
To grace thy bright baptismal hour.

IV.

Ravens croaked in the pale moonlight, When thou wert wedded to the Night. (Unfitting match for one so fair.) Thunders growled in their deep lair; All the children of the Light Closed their eyes in sad affright: Dian fled the skies in fear: Love dropt many a precious tear, And sat him down and pondered long, 'Twas no fit match for Sister Song. But the little nightingale, On the lime-bough in the vale, Warbled forth a nuptual lay. And Love dried his tears away, Hoping still for all the years; Dian too forgot her fears; And the stars oped their sweet eves, Full of wonder and surprise That they ever closed them. Gazed with fond and pure delight Upon thy shadowy frame, and caught From thy being half its light, And a measure of thy thought; The thunders ceased; the grief was o'er; And the ravens croaked no more.

V.

Imperial star-crowned Poesy! Thine, thine is the supremacy

O'er earthly powers; the strengthy pinion To win thy skyward vast dominion. The queen of all the ages crowned, And ever worshipped as divine, The daughter of the gods 'tis thine, In groves and temples filled with sound, To make thine everlasting shrine. O not indeed with silken stirs, And waving gonfalons on high, The empty pageantry of kings, But hovering dove-like with wide wings, In vastness of deep mystery, O'er thine enraptured worshippers. And still in sounds that never fail. But down the ages caseless throng, Borne high upon each flying gale, Loud swells the poet's song. Loud swells the music of thy sons, In lofty cadence thee to greet, Like as some mighty river runs, To kiss old Neptune's feet. Nor yet thy golden reign is o'er, Eternal as the sea That flings his treasures on the shore, This song shall rise to thee.

VI.

Of glorious Hellas in the ancient time, Thou wert the soul: she trod with steps sublime Before the nations, sang the pæan loud, And towered like a goddess o'er the world's dense crowd. All splendour-throned above the eternal days, She sat brow-mantled by the laurel crown, And hymned to thee immortal songs of praise, And watched the stream of Time come wandering down. There was thy temple reared; a mighty throng Of spirits, girded in thy royal robes, Flashed through thy halls, minds unenthralled and strong, Fit souls to drive the sun or wheel the globes Along the sky. There Homer, Titan-child, His early minstrelsy poured forth and told A tale of war, of leagued warriors bold, And kingdoms lost for love.—There Sappho wild, A low sweet strain of passion-uttered song,

Gave to the breezes as they wandered by, Beholding her with melancholy eye, Gazing at night-time on the starry throng, Wrapped in a wondrous dream; her passion's heat But shrouded her in Death's cold winding sheet. And there, with front divine, bold Æschylus Frighted the brave and shocked the timorous. Stole heavenly fire from the divine abodes. And like his hero combatted the gods. There too with tragic eye Euripedes, Wide eye o'erguarded by the brow serene, Gave boundless gaze, gaze of thought-boundlessness, Above him waved the laurel evergreen. O Poesy! these were thy darling sons; And glorious Hellas was thy darling home: Yet still the eternal tide of Beauty runs, The soul of Hellas lives beyond the tomb!

VII.

Weep Poesy! Thy Hellas is no more. The mighty mother of the fruitful womb, Lies folded in her winding sheet, Cradled in ruin and in gloom, And the wild waves that leap about the shore, Their ceaseless dirges chaunt around her tomb. Oh walk thy way with weary feet Among thy fallen temples, thy lone shrines! There nevermore the stars of song shall greet Thy heavenly presence; the embowering vines No more shall listen to the trancëd hymn, The weird-rapt utterance of the poet's dream; Dead or asleep are all thy seraphim; Oh weep! Dissolve thy being in the stream Of woe and utter bitterness! Oh rave, Rave on, wild waves, about the midnight grave!

VIII.

Yet dry those tears! Hellas is dead and gone;
Tears never may recall the dead to life;
And weeping is, at best, a fruitless strife
Of pain with passion; Mark the rising sun
That floods with glory yon Italian skies!
There souls as mighty shall leap forth in song,
And burst the veil of thought, and cleave the gloom
Of natal night. Behold yon spirit strong,

He of the crested brow and saintly eyes!
"Tis Dante! Mark his eagle-towering flight,
As rushing upward to the boundless dome
Of Heaven, he grasps primeval Source of light,
And taking all Creation by surprise,
He sheds his starry glance above the mystic night.

IX.

And Tasso wanders down by Arno's stream,
Musing on love and on fair Leonore,
Like some lorn spirit in the land of dream,
That walks upon a wild and barren shore,
And lists the ocean-breakers' ceaseless roar,
While ghastly spectres gleam upon the night,
And pointing at him shriek, "O nevermore
Thy soul shall thread the mazes of delight,
But thou shalt ever walk a lone and doomed sprite!"

He finds in grief a melancholy pleasure,
His grief o'erflows in low and plaintive song;
He tunes his harp to a wild witching measure,
A wild weird tale of battle and a throng
Of goodly knights, and chivalry that long
Sore plagued the infidel; and then awhile
Pauses to ponder on his deadly wrong,
And o'er his visage spreads a grim dark smile,
As he recals to mind his lordly tyrant's guile.

X.

Oh Poesy, how glorious is thy wine,
Though grief be with the chalice oft bestowed!
Why still o'er buried Hellas dost thou pine?
The cup of bitterness hath well-nigh overflowed:
And eager spirits throng upon the North,
Thy fane is reared in Britain's sea-girt isle,
Oh! dry once more thy bitter tears and smile;
The hour is pregnant to the bringing forth;
Thy children, hand in hand, a kingly throng
Around thy altar hymn the never-ending song.

XI.

Oh Poesy! might I dare join that band, Although the most unworthy of the throng; Might I but touch thy raiment's hem, my hand From such communion might at length grow strong, And I might throw some deathless music in my song. Oh Poesy! I would drink up thy wine And on thy altar offer up my heart, Do thou around my brow thy laurel twine, And draw me to thyself, until a part Of thine own being I become; the soul That lived and breathed in Ancient Greece could not Be thine, more truly than am I! O roll Thy life of life along the currents of my thought! Oh Poesy! it is not that I thirst To leave a record of mine own poor name; O Poesy! 'tis thee I love, not Fame; And I would seek my native gloom to burst, And like the eagle mount the skies, and meet The central sun, and commune with the stars: Do thou remove the fetters, and the bars Of thought unlock! Oh haughty robe! oh scornful feet! Yet spurn me not nor hurl me in the dust!

XII.

Oh Poesy! Queen Poesy! I know
That there are those on earth who love thee not.
I pity them; I deem them poor and blind;
Their flowers concealed, their gold laid by to rust,
Alas! they miss the real life and thought!
But count me not of such nor count my song
A mere chance echo gathered from the throng,
Nor scorn the offering of this hymn to thee,
O Poesy! Queen Poesy!

1851.

THE CHRISTIAN'S DEATH-BED.

How fair this night! 'Twas on such night as this That one I knew entered the realms of bliss; A soul that well had borne the march of life, And conquered in the many-handed strife; One that had climbed the steep ascent of Fame, And left behind an everliving name; But rather joyed that it was crowned with good, And registered upon the scroll of God.

How calm a sight to watch the pious die, What holy rapture lights within the eye. How sweet a smile the pallid lips display, The eagle spirit longs to soar away; No sad repinings mingle with the thought, Ungloomed by Fear, unmystified by Doubt; 'Tis Heaven that glows within the wasted frame, The spirit kindles with immortal flame.

'Twas thus she passed from Life's o'erclouded scene, And cleft the gloom that hides those realms unseen; Winged for the flight the spirit rushed on high, Nor seemed it aught so terrible to die, A little clenching of the outstretched hands, That pointed upward to the angel-lands; A half-heard sigh, and then the pang was o'er, The joy was her's, the grief and tears no more.

Oft as beneath yon waving cypress gloom
I pray and ponder over Phebe's tomb,
Like one that hears the stormy breakers roar,
Longs to set sail yet lingers on the shore,
I think of her, and still I long to go,
I yearn for Heaven, but linger still below;
Oh! when that sweet mysterious hour shall come,
Then "farewell Earth! I go to find my home."

1851.

GERALDINE.

THE merry Spring hath come again, And fields and woods are green, And Love o'ertides my heart and brain, For thee, young Geraldine!

The flowers bud up o'er hill and grove,
And deck the varied scene;
So I would garland thee with love,

o I would garland thee with love, My own young Geraldine.

Oh! even as the amorous stars
Pant for their darling Night;
As a caged eagle beats his bars,
And yearns towards the light;

As Ocean's wildly heaving breast
Desires the embracing sky,
My soul in thee would find her rest,
In thee her home of joy.

My Geraldine! those tender sighs
Breathe love for me, I know;
'Tis love within those wealthy eyes
That prompts their tearful flow!

I know thy bosom's bounding beat Is echo unto mine: I almost hear thy heart repeat My music, Geraldine!

Come to my arms, and clasp me round, And feast me with thy love: Oh! I will guard its purity,

As treasure from above.

Pour out the secret of thy soul, For I am wholly thine; And know me for a second self. Beloved Geraldine!

1851.

THE MYSTIC.

THEY called him Mystic, for a dream Begirt with dreams to him was life. A shadow circled round with strife: He sought the sun but grasped the gleam:

And toiling up the gloomy pass, The goal before him beaming bright For ever falsely mocked his sight, And seemed reflected in a glass.

Anon he cast his gaze behind, He loved the Future, yet he thought The vision from the Past was brought To lighten up the Coming Mind.

He filled the world-cup to the brim, A Light amid the darkness fixed, A guide, the Man and God betwixt, Yet was there not a guide for him.

All Nature groaned beneath his tread. As swollen pregnant at his touch; And yet she never bore him much; His life was useless, all men said.

Yet ever, when the world was scant, And men foreboded certain doom. A star would glimmer in the gloom, The Mystic's thought relieved the want.

'Twas said it could not last an hour,
'Twould perish withered in the bud;
In secret flowered the thought to good,
And ripened to maturer power.

So when the little glowworm dies,
Or seems to die, within its cell
It gathers newer life, until
The moth upsprings and wings the skies.

They called him Mystic;—but the thought
That whispered of the Day to Come,
The star that glimmered in the gloom,
Betokened him Celestial-taught;

A genuine prophet, one who trod
The mazy paths of dubious thought,
And labouring hard, to man he brought
The language of Perennial God.

1851.

THE CHANGELING.

T.

He was a wayward child of Earth,
Of thought unstable, loving change,
Without a purpose in his brain;
Ever, he would in fancy range
As 'twere from flower to flower, and then
When culled, again would fling them forth.

Π.

Now would he pluck resolve and say,—
But I am made for higher things
Than like a butterfly to skim
The flimsy air with aimless wings—
But o'er his brain new thought would swim,
And old resolve he cast away.

III.

Now would he soar to heights sublime,
And question of the hidden law,
And holding forth in lofty strain,
Would speak of the Eternal Awe;
Then lapsing to low theme again,
He dallied with the wings of Time.

IV.

So passed his life; his locks grew grey,
And Age ploughed furrows in his brow,
Then would he think upon the Past,
And then compare it with the Now;
Ceasing to think he died at last,
A life on nothings thrown away.

1851.

THE BARD TO COME.

OH, Mother Land, for aye the same, Thou home of glory and of song,— Thy circling waves shall guard thee long, And spread afar dear England's name.

Long, long the banner of thy worth
Shall flutter wide in every breeze:
Thy vessels sail yet unknown seas,
And thy dominion fill the earth.

And far as England's fame shall fly,
Her power of song shall travel too;
The memory of her poets true
Shall widen through eternity.

High pillared on the throne of Time,
Brow-mantled by the laurel crown,
The bard, while kingdoms topple down,
Lives sovereign soul, a priest sublime.

For him the sunbeams crown the height,
And wrap the fields in golden wreaths;
For him the seraph-phantom breathes,
And brings the morning out of night.

The power of song was born of God,
Long ere Chaotic mists were stirred;
Song was the wisdom of the word
That wakened Light from her abode.

The tri-une thought divinely dreamed,
The tri-une soul pervading Time,
The tri-une wisdom grown to prime,
And threefold nature is redeemed.

The little sunbeams deck the main,
From one great sun the glory flies;
The vagrant circles round the skies,
And meet in one great sun again.

Fair England heard her wide waves roll.

The sunbeams woke the ocean muse
The rising spray was caught in dews,
That falling bathed the impulsive soul

Of slumbering song in morning light:
She wakened, trembling pulsed with joys,
That rushed full-flowing through the voice,
Even echoing-heard by distant night.

And many a son of brainful strength
Was gendered of her virgin womb;
Nor yet we know the bards to come,
Concealed in Time's immenser length.

Oh! wondrous thought, and yet we wist
The blissful dawn hath scarce begun,
There is a yet diviner son
(Whose spirit glimmers through the mist),

Than Chaucer of the fair, bold front—
Who met the early glance of morn—
Poetic infant newly born,
Immersed in life's baptismal font:

Than Spenser of the magic charm,
That held all fancy in his grasp,
Nor other mortal dared to clasp
The rich round ripeness of the psalm:

Than Shakespeare—like a God in part,— He stood upon the hill of life, And broad intent upon the strife, Beheld the very under-heart:

Than Milton, who mid strife and stir, Rang out sonorous organ chimes, The guardian poet of the times Of Puritanic Oliver:

His was the soul regenerate,
The angels crowned him "King of Song;"
He led them on, a conquering throng,
And all the fiends were subjugate:

Than Young, the poet of the night,
He made himself a sacrifice
To God, he soared beyond the skies,
And bathed amid the waving light:

Than Cowper, of the sunny soul,
Pure dweller amid Olney bowers,—
Unsinful brother of the flowers—
Oh, sweet sad bells, toll, gently toll!

Than melancholy Emily,*
Or did the music only seem?
The notes were few and strong,—a dream
He vanished in eternity:

Than Coleridge, of the subtle thought,
The poet-mystic, both combined;
He clomb transcendant height of mind,
The truth was vaster than the doubt:

Than Shelley, keen to sense of wrong,
He soared to reach the source of light,
He dared the eagle's boldest flight,
But sang the skylark's sweetest song:

A wild erratic boy, the God
That brimmed his being he denied,—
The very song itself belied,
Such pure divineness overflowed:

Than Keats, the Muse's tenderest child,
Who brought from ancient classic ground,
A roving long-forgotten sound,
So sweet, the angels were beguiled

^{*}Melancholy Emily.—" In the year 1759, there came a poem, bearing the handwriting of one Emily, to the adjudicators of the Seatonian prize. It spoke of Death; but another was thought to speak in bolder and finer tones, and it was returned. Who he was, what he was, whence he came, whither he went, we know not. There is something touching in this brief memorial,-a few lines tell it all—the history of a life is compressed within a sentence. His fears, his hopes, his aspirations, his throbbings after bliss, his romantic schemes of happiness, his labours, his rambles, his melancholies, his disappointments, his loves are wholly unknown. So passes man, and the son of man! We have one expression of his heart: it is original, pathetic, beautiful. His poem is all that we have; it is the hic jacet; it tells of some one, but of whom we cannot ken. Across the heavens came a star, and waned; among the students came a poet, who sang of sable death, and perished."-John W. Lester, Criticisms.

To stay their own sweet songs of joy, The echo tranced the sinless ear:

They called him "Brother!" wished him near, Oh! how the spirits loved the boy!

Than Byron, like a sudden storm

That sweeps the main and flashes fire, He dashed his hand across the lyre,

And backward shrank in fierce alarm,*

An ever-changeful surging tide,

Whose constant wrath no change assuaged, Wild broil against himself he waged,

And man despised and God defied:

Than Wordsworth, sunshine tinged the wreath,
That bound his brow with golden hue:
He pierced the depth and found the true,

Inhaling God's immortal breath.

Conceived in Poesy's virgin womb,
All these were mighty sons of song,—
But they are units in the throng,

Nor yet we know the bards to come.

The veil is partly drawn aside,

And half is clear and half concealed.—

Diviner yet will be revealed, When bridegroom shall be wed to bride.

We hear the mystic prelude now

Of that eternal bridal song;
The great forerunner in the throng
Hath bound the wreath around his brow.

The herald of the Deity.

He bids the yearning world prepare, For that milennium drawing near,

For that evangel yet to be.

The cup hath well nigh overflowed, But one shall yet avert our doom: The stronger poet yet to come,

In form a Man, in soul a God.

For thee, my land, for ever blest,

For ever home of truth and song,—
Oh, he shall burst the chain of wrong,

1851. And perfect thee in heavenly rest.

^{*}This idea was unwittingly borrowed from Collins's Ode on the Passions.

Sonnets and Quartorzians.

I.

TO THE CHEVALIER DE CHATELAIN,

ON HIS POEM, "LES NOCES DE LA LUNE."

Thou daring rover in the realms of song,
Whose fame two sister nations proudly own,
Whose lyre interpretive hath oft made known,
The sounds of mighty minstrelsy, that throng
The bowers of English Poesy, among
The kindred hearts of France; to what far zone
Say hast thou travelled now, that with a tone,
Witching as some enchanter's spell, along
The paths of space thou lead'st us in weird flight,
And, by Imagination's potent wand,
Dost give to the sweet scenes of summer night
To wear the hues of mystic Wonder-land?
Long may the subtle spell abide with thee,
That works such feats of Poet-Wizardry!

1863.

П.

ROBERT BROWNING.

(ACROSTIC)

RARE analyst, was he, of all that lies
Obscure to common minds, in Thought and Act;
Beneath the husk probing to where impact,
Embedded hides the kernel. To his eyes
Revealed, the soul stood nude of all disguise:
There was his power: the underheart of Fact
Brought, dragged from the abyss, by a cataract,
Rolling out uncouth song, to the Sunrise.
Our Nineteenth-Century Dramaturge! And yet,
Wanting mellifluous tone and crystal speech,
Ne'er while he lived the crowd his worth confest;
In death, behold him crowned! all eyes are wet,
Now he has past beyond their honor's reach,
Gone to join Shakespeare, Shelley, and the rest.

Gone to join Shakespeare, Shelley, and the rest. January, 1890.

TO JAMES SMART LINWOOD.

Linwoop! with thee, my friend, full many an hour Of intellectual pleasure have I spent, A love with noble aspirations blent And cherished in the Muse's sweetest bower. How oft, with thee, I've roamed the breezy hill,

Explored the woodland, shared the rustic seat,
And wooed old Nature in her lone retreat,

In days whose recollections linger still.

And now stern Duty hath our separate sphere Of individual toil to each assigned,

But still, though leagues divide us, thou art dear, And still, by me and mine, art kept in mind; And oft, delighted Memory brings before

1855. My retrospective gaze our haunts in days of yore!

TO ERNEST JONES.

JONES! long mine eye hath watched thee from afar, In thy brave championship of Truth and Right, Illuming our world's darkness, like a star

Whose beams are kindled at the source of Light; And now I know thee nearer, in thy face

A likeness to the great and strong and bold Worthies of England, in the days of old

Who fought for English Freedom, do I trace:

An heir indeed of that heroic race, Hampden and Milton, Sidney and the men

Whose earnest lives our glorious annals grace,

Freedom's stern potentates of sword and pen; Thine be the sacred task, the aim sublime,

1855. To re-instate the virtues of that Ancient Time!

TO ERNEST JONES.

ON THE PUBLICATION OF THE BATTLE DAY, AND OTHER POEMS.

ALL day thy page I pondered, while the sun,
The summer-sun his lavish beams expended,
And as the softening shades of eve descended
I closed the book and murmured out "Well done!"
Well done! My little tribute would I proffer
To him who patriot themes hath wooed in song,
Though sorrow, suffering, scorn, abuse and wrong

Be all that an ungrateful world can offer.

But I do deem that future fame shall hail
Thy labours, and posterity record
Thy worth in golden letters, O my friend!
And after-ages o'er thy muse shall bend
Admiring; yet, though even this hope should fail,
1855. In thine own conscience is thy best reward.

VI.

TO MAZZINI AND KOSSUTH.

ILLUSTRIOUS and twin exiles! Earth exults
At utterance of your names and proudly owns
Her dearest children. In loud thunder-tones,
Wherever freeborn heart with heart consults,
Those names shall sound, signals of grand revolts,
Above the crash and din of falling thrones:
What though in tyrant-forgëd chains still groans
The imprisoned heart of toil, of high results
Not wholly barren are the splendid lives,

Which ye have lavished on the growing cause Of world-wide liberty and equal laws.

In vain the strong hand of Oppression strives
To quench the lamps ye kindled, stars sublime
1856. Of promise, making bright the avenues of Time.

VII.

IN MEMORIAM.

HENRY ALLON, D.D., APRIL 16, 1892.

ANOTHER venerated head laid low,

Ended another holy pilgrimage!

How fast the spirits who, this marvellous Age, Have shaped by their strong presence, seem to go From us in Death; anticipating, so,

The Century's ending: Prophet, poet, sage, Patriot, reformer, from our life's worn stage We miss them strangely, one by one. And now He hath gone hence, the man we loved, admired,

Revered, our saintly Allon, who hath trod
Through these long years, blameless in sight of

The upper stairway: There beyond, with Paul And Moses on the heights, "visions of God" * Are his, past all to which he here aspired!

^{*}The allusion here is to his published book, "The Vision of God, and Other Sermons."

VIII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, BART.

PSALM XXXVII. 6.

THE men whom God with rarest gifts endues,
Full oft He brings thro' Trial's fiercest fire,
For as, than Earth, you outspread Heavens are higher,
His thoughts and ways transcend our narrow views;
Yet 'mid all ouffring let the instance.

Yet 'mid all suffering, let the just secure In Faith abide; tho' obloquy and shame

Unmerited awhile may soil his name, And scourged by evil tongues his soul endure Such pangs as these inflict; the sense of right

Within his conscious breast they cannot kill,
Nor e'er the blest assurance take away,
That Time, the minister of that High Will,
Shall his integrity bring forth like light,

April, 1891. His vindication clear as the open day.

IX.

TO QUEEN VICTORIA.

VICTORIA! Queen of England! unto thee
The independent homage of a man
Devoted unto dreams republican
Is rendered here in faithful fealty;
Because the woman doth outshine the queen,
In actions noble, generous, brave and wise,
And that fair character, which never dies,
Of a true spirit, simple and serene;
For never, since the sturdy yeoman quelled
The frenzied tumults of a turbulent race,
Hath native royalty so stamped the face
Of British monarch! Far hast thou excelled
Thy predecessors on the throne, and, though
1856.I have small love for kings, to thee fair Queen I bow.

X.

TO M. M. ON HER BIRTHDAY.

WHILE Summer-plenty crowns the laden board,
And while around the happy guests are met
To honour this dear day, I cannot let
The season pass, without a loving word
Of fond congratulation. While a chord
Within my breast beats true to Love, while yet
Grateful Affection doth retain his seat
Within my heart, oh! I could ill afford

To let thy birthday glide without a song,
Telling dear-heart, of all the love I bear thee;
Telling dear-heart, a song I ill can spare thee;
The flow of sweet emotions does me wrong;
And Love too deep for utterance, and too dear,
1855. What it can ne'er withhold, can hardly spare.

XI

On what a fall was there when * * * * * fell!

Not that Archangel, who, from glory bright

Hurled headlong through the dark abyss of Night,

Sank deep into the furiate jaws of Hell,

Evoked the pitying tears of Heaven's high host

In more abundance, than my tears hast thou;

Oh! I have wept for thee, and weep thee now;

Lost, lost to Fame and me, for ever lost!

Thine was a spirit strong to climb the height

Of steep Parnassian mount, and thread the maze

Of song, and give to all the after-days

A name to glisten in Earth's crown like light;

But base-born Pleasure came, thy finer sense

1855. Destroyed, and lo! thine utter impotence.

XII.

O THRONE-APPALLING voice, whose triumph cry,
Borne on the upward current of the stream
Of Time, doth mock at regal vanity,
Like as some gallant bark, that rideth high
Upon the torrent-waves, doth ever seem
To mock the pride of the tempestuous sky,
The electric thunder and the lightening beam!
O voice, that, like the echo of a dream
Of dread redemption, boometh up the gloom
That hides the years unborn! O utterance
Prophetic of the Liberty to come!
Arrest Earth's tyrants in their giddy dance,
And let repentance lighten o'er their path,
That none may perish in the Day of Wrath!

XIII.

God and the People! Hark the mighty cry,
That, like an echo from the moss-green tomb
Of ancient Freedom, thrills the soul of Rome,

And wakens Thought to her vitality.

God and the People! God and Italy!

Ay! Romans waken to your morn of glory,

1852.

Re-act the heroic deeds of classic story, Win back your former fame and liberty.

1855.

The spirit of Rienzi, like a star

In Heaven, keeps watch above you; oh, spring forth, And lead the banded freemen of the Earth

To win the victory of the final war,

When pontiff, prince and crowned usurping clan

1852. Shall flee before the march of liberated Man.

XIV.

IMMORTAL Milton,—thou whose spirit vast
Did soar to contemplate the Love on high,
Nor Hell could hide from thy deep-searching eye;

Thou who didst make the name Iconoclast

A name dear to our England through all time;— Oh, would that deep religious heart of thine

Were beating now amongst us, that divine

Unswerving energy were alive to climb

The heights of mental effort now! for we Are fallen from ancient freedom, and we bleed

In idol-fetters once again, and need

Another image-breaker like to thee:

Once more shine out upon us, Freedom's star;

1855. Breathe in our midst thy spirit from afar.

XÝ.

God-fearing, and God-loving were the men, Who erst in England fought for England's cause, And brake the fetters of unholy laws;

Ay! due to Cromwell's sword and Milton's pen

The glories of that generation, when Stern Liberty, in Puritanic guise,

Besieged the hold of antiquated lies,

And in the Stuart's stead victorious reign

Of Right established. And who now would fain

Of lingering fraud and lingering wrong be free, God-fearing and God-loving men must be,

Else were the strife and struggle all in vain;

For He alone can sunder every chain,

Who hath declared the law of Perfect Liberty.

XVI.

Not where the sceptic wanders in a cloud
Of doubt, perplexed by false philosophies;
Nor where improved in outer derkness lies

Nor where, immersed in outer darkness, lies, Shut out from God's great scheme, the fallen brood

Of Atheism, spawn of Eldest Hell,

Can Liberty's immortal load-star shine; Nor hence the spark proceed to blast the mine, Or storm the many-fortressed citadel. 'Tis God alone can work the miracle!

The Men of Faith alone can champion Right,
Securely through the dangers of the Night,
To the far heights where morning loves to dwell.
The Men of Faith, these are the only free,
Planted upon the rock of Gospel Liberty.

1855.

XVII.

LONDON: A.D., 1854.

Along the dusty pavement worn and cold,

I walk and watch the busy crowd go by,
And mark the feverish step, the untrusting eye,
That speak of lust and avarice and gold,
And ask, is this that London, which of old
Within her guardian gates to lusty life
Nursed Freedom, dared with kings to stand at strife,
And shed her blood for England? Ah, the bold
Brave days are gone, and gone the ancient race
Of citizens! Where once, all unwithstood,
In native worth the Puritan walked proud,
A greedy, sensual, slavish crew have place,
And the grim ghosts of heroes overhead
Gaze down in grief, and deem their city dead.

XVIII.

ON THE AUSTRIAN OCCUPATION OF THE DANUBIAN PRINCIPALITIES IN 1854.*

And was it then for this brave blood was shed?
For this the sister nations plighted troth?
To rob the glory from the victor's head,
And give the garland unto Austrian sloth?
Is all a vacant gain, and Freedom still
An empty dream? And shall Vienna's pride
And traitor artifice the rising tide
Of Europe's liberty roll back at will?
Shall England lend her mantle to the lie,
And stifle infant Freedom at the birth?
Ah no! We, who can claim affinity
With mightiest spirits that have swept the Earth,
Cromwell and Milton,—swear it, no! and dare

Bid the false statesmen of our land beware.

^{*} Vide Note on page 417.

XIX. FEBRUARY, 1855.

How are we falling from our ancient height,
Our ancient name and fame are passed away,
That awed the world, compelling kings to obey;
Ah! waned or waning is that marvellous light
Which once illumed our England, home of right
And truth and freedom; vanished is that ray,
And flown the glories of our elder day;
On our false statesmen let the curse alight!
Are there no men in Britain, fit to climb
The stairs of power and wield the helm of state?
Oh! to recell that Puritaria time.

Oh! to recall that Puritanic time,

When at great Cromwell's council-table sat Our Milton, and our Blake upon the sea Led the victorious navy of the free!

XX.

THE DISASTERS IN THE CRIMEA: 1855.*

Whence these disasters that perplex our arms?
Oh, not from lack of bravery in our men!
For bright our star of valour shines, as when
Of old it shone the herald of alarms,
Dismay, defeat to all our enemies,
What time soe'er with England waging war;
Whether at Crescy, or famed Agincourt,
Or later still Blenheim and Ramilies,
Or latest Waterloo. Let Inkerman
And that great Balaklava charge attest!
These woes are hatched in ministerial nest,
Where Lord Corruption lolls on high Divan,
And mocks his country's grief in courtly jest,
Turning to shame the name of Englishman.

XXI. THE FALL OF SEBASTOPOL.

Fallen! She hath fallen! The stronghold of the South
No more remains a terror to the lands;
The tide of war hath given her to our hands:
Let songs of triumph fly from mouth to mouth!
Yea! She hath fallen! O'erwhelmed in battle's tide.
Ye conquering nations, glorify your God!
Who hath uplifted his avenging rod,
And humbled in the dust the tyrant's pride.

^{*} Vide Note on page 417.

Yea fallen! Not all the valour of her sons,
Through crowned with victory in unnumbered wars,
Could save her. Tell it unto all the stars
And to the rising moons and setting suns,
And to the Arctic and the Antarctic Pole,
Fallen is the haughty crest of Great Sebastopol!

1855. XXII.

1855.

And this is Retribution! Thus doth God
Pursue the wicked! His impartial hand
Deals fairly out, upon an Evil Land,
Evil for evil; Blood atones for blood;
Oh! this is Destiny's unchanging law,
Inscribed upon the annals of all Time,
Swift unto doom approach the feet of Crime,
Oppressors mark, and stand appalled in awe!
Noted in Heaven are all the events of Earth,
And him, who tramples upon Human Right,
Hath God delivered over unto Night
Despair and darkness. Let him of the North,
His laurels all for Euxine's tears exchanged,
Herein behold Sarmatia's wrongs avenged.

XXIII.

And thou the worst of all the miscreant brood,
Abhorrëd tyrant, who awhile, dost reign,
By force of arms, upon the banks of Seine,
Thy hateful hands imbrued in patriot blood,
God's eye is on thee also, and thy doom
Is written, thou art in the balance weighed,
And in thy turn, thou too shalt stand dismayed,
Tyrant! or soon or late thine hour shall come.
A little while thou art an instrument,

By fire and sword and sanguinary war, To deal Heaven's vengeance on the Russian Czar, A little while to thee the power is lent:

Thy crime alike for vengeance cries on thee,

1855. Destroyer of a nation's liberty.

XXIV.

THE PUBLIC REJOICINGS ON THE TAKING OF SEBASTOPOL.

OH! whence these loud rejoicings? Dance and song And festal glee, triumphant notes that break The sloth of many years, and bid awake The spirit of a nation buried long.

Too long, too long involved in dreams of gold,
And filled with churlish feud and envious spite;
Like a new-morning bursting on the night
Streams the victorious flag of war unrolled.
Oh! deep these notes of triumph from the heart
Of a regenerated land arise,
And our forefathers bending from the skies
Approve our courage. Well this better part,
Dear England, hast thou chosen, to go forth
Champion of Right and Truth oppressed o'er all the
Earth.

September 1855.

XXV.

THE NEW YEAR, 1856.

O BLYTHE New Year, the threshold of the door
Scarce hast thou crossed, before thy hands unfold
The boon and blessing which thou hast in store,
Priest of glad tidings unto young and old.
What news are these thou bringest from afar?
Lo! at thy bidding grief and tumult cease,
And men grown frantic with the din of war,
Lay down their arms, and chaunt the hymn of
Peace.

Because the warring nations war no more,
The raging sound of conflict dies away,
And home-returned our ships, beside the shore,
Lie calm at anchor in the sheltered bay;
The gentle Arts revive, the poet's tear
Is turned to joy, by thee O blythe New Year!

XXVI.

ON THE DEFEAT OF LORD PALMERSTON'S CONSPIRACY BILL.

RIGHT nobly have our senators withstood
This base attempt to foist upon our law
The dictates of the Tuileries. In awe
Of him, who shed his country's bravest blood
To work his own aggrandisement, we stood
Not for a day; nor heard the carrion caw
Of France with aught but high disdain. We saw
And chose the path of honoured rectitude,

The path our fathers trod; and ne'er will we
Consent to wear the fetters of the slave,
The chains by tyrants forged: but still shall be
Our isle a refuge for the exiled brave,
The nursing home of infant Liberty,
Long as her guardian cliffs shall front the wave.
February, 1848.

XXVII.

ON THE CIVIL WAR IN AMERICA.

Our Freedom, and our country, and our homes!
Grand watchwords these, when men go forth to War,
To drive their fierce invading foes afar,
While Carnage, an avenging angel, roams
The battle-field: but how in mockery booms
The thunder-cry of Right from men that are
Themselves the charioteers of Slavery's car,
And whose asserted Independence dooms
Their brethren to perpetual bondage. Not
To such, All-righteous God! be victory given,
Scatter their hosts from underneath Thine Heaven,
And from the face of Earth erase the blot
Of Empire founded on the Negro's groan,
The bondage of the black its corner-stone!
June, 1863.

XXVIII.

SUGGESTED BY WORDSWORTH'S

Beginning-" Great men have been amongst us."

GREAT men are with us still, the good and wise,
The poet and the patriot and the sage;
They err, who deem alone some bygone age
The flowing stream of British worth supplies.
All honor to the noble memories

Of famous names that grace our storied page! But still in English bosoms the fine rage Of genius burns, and prompts to grand emprise. Let who would call our land degenerate,

And o'er his country's lapse his hands be wringing, Visit our matchless halls devote to Learning;

Or mark our honest pilots of the State;

Or hear, his soul with poet-passion burning, 1870. Our Alfred, his Arthurian idylls singing.

XXIX.

TO THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P.,

ON HIS RUMOURED RETIREMENT FROM THE LIBERAL LEADERSHIP.

O STATESMAN, who so nobly at the helm
Hast piloted our goodly ship of state
On her long prosperous course, now to our fate
Desert us not lest the rude waves o'erwhelm
Our bulwarks and our hopes submerge. The recancill spare men as thou art, wisely great.
And now the less that with a reckless crew
On board before us lie untraversed seas;
Who knows on what rocks peril-haunted, these
Unskilled may founder and the nation rue
Her rash ungrateful folly? O eschew
Thy just resentment, and thy well-earned ease
Forego: still keeping watch and prompt to seize
The rudder soon as danger looms in view!
March 12th, 1874.

XXX.

ON THE BULGARIAN ATROCITIES AND OUR EASTERN POLICY.

No more illusion! Lo, the nation wakes
And rises simultaneous; but, how fell
The cry of horror which dissolves the spell
That wrought her stupor, and her slumber breaks!
A wail of poignant agony that rakes
And rends the soul, from maid and matron wrung,
Heart-maddened by unutterable wrong;
And moan of guileless slaughtered babes, that shakes
Our strong men into weeping. God and Lord!
Was it for this we stood between the Turk
And righteous doom? And of this hell-born work
Must we partake the infamy abhorr'd?
Behold our deep remorse, and give us grace

At any cost the stigma to erase!

1876.

XXXI.

AT A RECENT ORDINATION.

My winged desires went with the solemn prayer,
Ascending to the Throne, as on thy head
The holy hands of presbyters were laid,
Ordaining thee thy pastoral charge to bear;
High services fulfilling, which to share
Angels might not disdain; to break the bread
Of life to man, and rouse the moral dead,
And Love's sweet message to the lost declare.
Welcome, O Brother! to the Master's field,
And, blessed by Him, pursue thy grand employ,
His word thy conquering sword, His strength thy shield,
His glory thy one aim, until, with joy,

XXXII.

Thy duteous course fulfilled, it shall be given 1863. To thee to wear the victor's wreath in Heaven.

TO THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, OCCASIONED BY HIS RESOLUTIONS ON THE EASTERN QUESTION.

Thou watchful guardian of the Public Good,
Though spiteful faction snarl, still undeterred,
Give to the Nation's will, in thy choice word,
An uttered voice and scare the clamorous brood
Whose idiot cry is, "War." Of English blood
No drop must in this Eastern fray be spilt,
To save from righteous doom the Power whose guilt
Hath ripened to the harvest. In the flood
Of retributive wrath, which it hath stirred,
Now let the baneful moon of Islam set
To rise no more, of God and man abhorred,
Who never can the shrieks and groans forget
From wronged Bulgaria wrung; her tears still wet

May, 1877. XXXIII.

THE ELECTION, APRIL 1880.

Hallow the Muscovite's avenging sword.

Ruing the rashness which, six years ago,
Misplaced in reckless hands the reins of power,
Our country to the greatness of the hour
And crisis hath arisen to day; and lo!
The adventurer who hath wrought such waste and woe,
And soiled and stained with wrongful war the flower
Of British Honour, wins the fitting dower

His gross misrule hath earned him; and shall go,
Down to the Future, with a name to move
From age to age, the meed of British scorn;
Not like to THAT which woke his jealous spite,
GLADSTONE, a name set in perennial light
The page of England's history to adorn,
And shrined for ever in her people's love.

XXXIV.

HURRAH FOR LEEDS!

ALL Honour be to Leeds and her true men! Who, in the van, this noble fight have shared, And with their many-thousand tongues declared, How England loves her Greatest Citizen! Hear it, ye minions of the Court! and when Ye hear it, know the slight with which ye dared Insult him (though magnanimous he cared Not greatly) all our hearts resent. Again High-seated at the council-board of State, Chief there, as is most meet, let him bear sway: The man of tricks and shows hath played his play, Let him begone with speed and relegate To History, which shall tell his baneful deeds ;-GLADSTONE FOR PREMIER! and HURRAH FOR 1880. LEEDS!

XXXV.

THE PEOPLE'S VOICE.

The Sovereign People hath announced her Will,
That will what other power dare disobey?
It calls the counsels of the state to sway,
Our chosen leader Gladstone; to fulfil
Those ardent hopes, which make our pulses thrill,
Of prescient rule and wise that shall allay
Our sense of foreign wrong, and root away
From our own fields what lingering weeds of ill
Still choke the growth of Progress. Wherefore be
The tongue of Faction dumb, the private pique
Of Courtly circle and the ambitious dream
Of personal pretence to rivalry
Abandoned! When uprisen peoples speak
Their voice is Law, their mandates are supreme.

XXXVI.

ON MR. GLADSTONE'S RESUMPTION OF POWER.

Borne back to govern on the swelling wave
Of a great nation's loud determined voice
She hails thee, GLADSTONE, ruler of her choice!
To thee our hopes clung tremblingly to save
The functions of the Commons from that grave,
Wherein th' arch plotter deemed he should rejoice
To have immured them. In the trying hour
Of a strange peril, dimly, vaguely felt,
Preparing for us by those hands which dealt
So darkly with pre-rogative and power,
Thou wert our beacon-light to warn: and now
The danger past, the People's victory won,
In the brave path of future progress, Thou
1880. Shalt be our "guiding-star" to lead us on!

XXXVII.

TO THE MARQUIS OF HARTINGTON

Nobly descended of a noble race,—
The statesman's prize already in thy grasp,
Called by thy Sovereign to the highest place,
The voice within bade thee disdain to clasp
Those reins of power, which, 'twas well understood,
The nation's will had destined for thy Friend;
Nor from thy soul's great height wouldst thou descend,
But sacrificing to the Public good
Private ambition, thou didst stand aside
Right loyally: O, it was grand! And when
The annals of To-Day are writ, with pride
This to thine honour History shall record;
And, one day, shall thy grateful countrymen
1880. Thy hero-victory over self reward.

XXXVIII.

How sweet it is by the smooth stream to walk,
And watch the gentle twilight creeping down,
O'er the long flats, in shades of sober brown,
With her I love, and while in gentle talk
The hours away amid the lingering light,
Plucking the grasses from the river side,
Or the marsh-flowers, until the eventide

Is lost amid the splendours of the night.

Hence is derived a pure and quiet joy,
And mid these scenes my fancy loves to stray,
From the wild stir of human life, away,
Where hatred and intrigue their powers employ,
And steal away the sense of higher things,
And rob the mind of all her best imaginings.

1855.

XXXIX.

Oft have I sighed for some lone hermitage,
In rural valley watered by sweet streams,
A little dwelling-place of quiet dreams,
Where man with man doth ne'er in strife engage;
But the stern voice of Duty hinders still,
And keeps me in the populous city pent,
Afar from mead and vale and mountain rill,
For I, a man, to preach to men am sent.
Yet Nature, yet a little while I steal,
To wander with thee in thy lonely bower,
And while away in dream a pleasant hour,
And half forget this great world's woe and weal,
And when I leave thee, 'tis with pained breast;
But in a world of sin, 'tis sin to be at rest.

XL.

The woeful winter now is past and gone,

The frozen snow hath thawed upon the hills,

The ice hath melted, and a thousand rills

Dart from their hollows, dancing in the sun;

Already have the shrubs and trees begun

To don their spring-attire; fresh fragrance fills

The air, from peeping blooms that sweet distils,

And the blythe birds breathe out their orison:

And me, whom grief hath all the winter held,

Doth the boon season once again inspire,

The threatening frown of haunting sorrow quelled,

To woo my loved but long-neglected lyre,

And on my brain the old swift fancies throng,

My heart warms with the spring and blossoms into song.

XLI

My spirit hath held converse with the wise,
And great and good who linger through all time,
Their words and works, and many a dream sublime,
Clothëd in light, hath passed before my eyes,
In the rathe morning-time of life; and I
In groves of song have fluttered like a dove,
Have thrilled with rapture at the touch of love,
And many a smile have won from Beauty's eye.
But oh, those days are past! and ah! my youth
Is passing, and the glory from my life!
And now I stand despairing in the sirife,
Bewailing ancient days of love and truth
Ere grief and suffering met me.—I would fain
Lie down and dream those happy dreams again.

XLII.

'Tis sweet to wander out amid the meads
And hear the humming of the summer airs,
Oblivious of the lean low-thoughted cares
That all day long the fetid city breeds:
To catch the balmy breeze from off the rise,
To hear the low love-murmurs of the birds,
Or the dull lowing of the distant herds,
And call down inspiration from the skies.
There is a quiet all around, a hush
Holy as reigns in sculptured sanctuary,
Here Nature, robed in deep divinity,
Proud for the love of God, stands all ablush
In silent poetry. Ah, Well-a-day!
Here might one dote on love and dream the hours away.

XLIII.

1854.

WRITTEN IN A COPY OF THE VILLAGE BRIDAL AND OTHER POEMS.

LIKE some wild garden is this book of poems,

A little wilderness o'ergrown with flowers,
Breathing of cornfields boon and summer-bowers,
And of our Fatherland's dear cottage homes;
Nor yet alone 'mong flowers thy Fancy roams,
Young dreamer riched with Thought's immortal dowers,
Nor in voluptuous ease alone thy hours
Glide on; but thou art busied with the dooms

Of old world-tyrannies to ruin falling,
And hopes of Virgin Liberty sublime,
And o'er the wide extended fields of Time
A thousand angel-tongues to thee are calling,
Free and exultant, when no more enthralling
Proud kings shall wield their sceptres stained with crime.
1856.

XLIV.

Sweet melodies are all around us ringing.

The day is rich with music; for at morn
The merry lark, on sprightly wings upborne,
Fills the wide azure with his silver singing.
The drowsy noon is rich with music, bringing
Soft minstrelsies, from forest groves forlorn,
Where, hidden close amid the leafy thorn,
The mellow thrush abroad her notes is flinging.
The night is rich with music; for, when day
With many a lingering look forsakes the vale,
Floats on the air a warm and passionate lay,
As in her lime-tree bower the nightingale
Sings loud, as though her little throat would fail,
Beneath the clear stars and the moon's white ray.

1863.

XLV.

LIGHTLY the maiden sang:—"An arrow sped
Swift from the bow is life, and will not stay,
A river gliding rapidly away,
A summer flower whose fragrance soon is shed;
Then, ere the golden moments, all are fled,
Mortal enjoy thy youth's delightful day,
Make friends with genial mirth while yet you may,
And leave the dead to think about the dead ":—
Lightly the maiden sang, and lightly fell
The blight that withered up her beauty's hue,
Her song is heard no more beneath the blue;
With death among the dead 'tis her's to dwell;
Mortal she preaches from her coffined cell

Far other than she sang to me and you.

XLVI.

Majestic river eddying to the sea,
Swift-winding amid fields of waving corn,
And tracts of marshland lying lone and lorn,
And under shades of forest greenery,
And onward still, through changing scenery,
With sweeping current in thy flight art borne,
Whether grim Night drops down, or laughing Morn
With lightsome step skips o'er the flowery lea;
So runs our life: Change doth on change ensue,
And Memory only of each vanished scene
Retains the tender thought, that, "such has been,
Mid these, some sweet, some sad have we passed through;"—
Till, like thy meeting with the sea, O River!
Life rolls its troubled tides into the vast "For-Ever."

XLVII.

At summer noon in still retired nook,

Beneath cool branches of wide-spreading tree,
And fanned by odours breathing from the lea,
And lulled by murmurs of the rippling brook,
Rapt o'er the pages of some soothing book
Of dainty minstrelsy, 'tis sweet to me
To lie and dream. Far from my fancy be
Grey Care, and Envy with her haggard look,
And wild Ambition with his heart on fire;
Ne'er let me claim companionship with these
Ill-favoured sprites that rob the mind of ease
And rack the breast with torturing desire,
But let me woo the muse or strike the lyre,
Embowered 'mid Nature's deep tranquilities!

1863.

1863.

XLVIII.

TO A CANARY.

BLYTHE little captive that, within thy wires,
Trillest a lay so loud and clear and free,
Thy prison-song such jubilance inspires,
It seems to set my soul at liberty;
And fancy-winged with infinite desires,
I fly far hence, across the southern sea,
To isles where strains, like these I hear from thee,

A myriad little throats prolong: nor tires
The travelling spirit, nor pauses even there,
But on, to other islands, speeds her flight,
Washed by Elysian seas and lapped in air
Elysian, where mid day that knows no night,
Undying minstrelsies of high delight
Upswell, from golden harps that angels bear,

1868.

1863.

XLIX.

TO----

Marvel not, Lady, at a Poet's pride,
That thou should'st deign to smile upon his lays
Tho' they should never live to after-days,
But die, as many a sweeter strain hath died,
Unheeded by the world; yet as the tide
Of rippling brook, lit by the sun's warm rays,
With gayer current to the ocean strays,
So these frail songs more pleasantly shall glide
To Lethe's whelming wave, that they have won
Thy kindly eye to glance upon the page:
Or should propitious Fortune bear them on,
Safe voyagers, to some Hereafter-Age,
More bright the lustre of their fame shall be,
That they have found, sweet Lady, grace with thee!

L.

What, though the busy world no heed should lend,
Shall I for that forbear to trill my song?
The forest-bird that warbles all night long,
The blackbird piping where the willows bend,
The matin merle, whose clear notes seem to blend
With the blue heaven, and all the feathered throng
Employ their joyous strains, and feel no wrong,
Through none applaudingly their voice attend.
A minstrel I, for minstrelsy's sweet sake,
Why should I reck of men their praise or blame?
Or woo the idle flatteries of Fame?
Out of pure love of song be it mine to wake
Unmercenary melodies, that take
Their inspiration from the heart's warm flame.

LI.

There was a season when wild thoughts had birth
Within my brain, and stormy passions strong
Convulsed my eager heart, and made me long,
'Mid the fierce strifes of men, to carve on earth
A name that should survive me, and go forth
To other time, in record and in song;
But that is past; nor with the restless throng
Care I to mingle now, and share their dearth
Of all true joy, and peace, and tenderness.
These shun the crowd, and seek the solitude
Where ne'er the world, with voices harsh and rude,
Disturbs the spirit's tranquil reveries;
There let me, far from all the din of men,
1863. Wander with Contemplation in the glen.

LII.

AT PONT-Y-MYNACH; OR DEVIL'S BRIDGE, CARDIGANSHIRE.

June 16th, 1877.

Through regions wild and lone, 'neath the hot beams
Of the June sun, the Cambrian heights we roamed,
And 'mong the rocks in hollow vales entombed,
Heard the loud music of the mountain streams;
Until, at noon, that double arch we gained
Which spans the awful chasm, where Mynach pours
Her foaming torrents down the glen, and roars
With voice of thunder, weird and unrestrained,
Holding the soul in thrall to see and hear
Cataract on cataract, as in maniac sport,
Leaping with headlong daring. Hours flew by
Unheeded, and as twilight hovered near,
We marvelled to have found the day so short,
Confused our sense of Time as though by sorcery.

LIII.

GLEN HELEN, ISLE OF MAN.

GLEN Helen, loveliest thou of Mona's vales!

Not unadmiring, thy romantic bowers

We threaded, and upclomb where Rheinas pours

His foaming cataract downward and prevails

1857.

O'er the opposing rocks: yet thy scene fails
Of half its magic, while the vulgar throng
Of sight-seers roam each day thy paths along,
Whose laughter rude the sanctity assails
Which Nature made thine own. More sweet it was
To us, a league beyond, from the lone height,
To watch the Spoot Vane's waters leaping bright,
And hear him chant with voice of hollow bass
His deep-toned lay, albeit within a shrine,
Whose native beauty may not match with thine.

LIV.

To-Night I held my baby in these arms,
My week-old baby, and I seemed to trace,
Within the workings of his infant face,
Of future greatness, future good the germs;
A fancied likeness there to radiant forms,
That to poetic dreams of mine a grace,
Had lent of old: and as in mute embrace
I closer prest him, mingled with alarms,
Delights before unknown did blossom up
Within my heart. Gazing with pensive smile
Upon thee, O thou child of many prayers!
Thy gentle-heartëd mother lay the while.
O life! what secrets lie within thy cup?
And born with thee dear babe what blended
hopes and fears?

LV.

Low in the West fades the last line of light,
And, save the rustling breeze that idly blows,
No sound disturbs the solitude of Night,
But Earth and Heaven sleep swathed in soft repose:
Repose, but not for this o'erladen breast,
Where wild emotions wage incessant strife,
Consorting ill with this calm hour of rest,
Heaving and surging with the storms of life.
Deep in yon sheltering vale the churchyard graves,
Each to its tenant yields a quiet home,
There in the languid breeze the long grass waves
Its funeral plumes and beautifies the gloom;
There, with the dead, dwells the repose I need;
1855Oh, for a little grave among the grasses hid!

LVI.

AT OLD WARDEN, BEDFORDSHIRE.

There is no lovelier village in our land
Than this. On the hill-side the cottages,
Like Alpine dwellings nested 'mong the trees,
And garlanded with flowers on every hand,
Recal to mind scenes of an earlier day,
And bring back to the memory that time,
When 'mong the snowy-crested hills sublime
Of Switzerland, from England far away,
With thee dear wife I ranged. Again I dream
Of lakes and mountains and pine-forests green,
Of vallies watered by the blue Sarine,
And Friebourg's mellow bells. In fancy seem
From the tall height to hear the torrent's flow,
Mingling with peasant-songs in the deep vale below.
June 28th, 1858.

LVII.

They say affection is a transient thing,
That Love o'er human hearts resigns his power,
When in our hands he hath reposed the flower
They longed to pluck; that only for the Spring
Love's bloom endures and then dies off for ever;
But not to me hath Love bestowed such dower,
My love but stronger groweth every hour,
Nor Time with envious hand the links shall sever
That bind, my gentle wife, my heart to thine.
Since thou hast borne that sweet endearing name,
My heart for thee with yet more fervent flame
Hath glowed, nor ever of that one word "mine"
Have I the depths all fathomed; it is given
Alone to attain Love's uttermost in Heaven.

1856.

LVIII. A SPRING SONNET.

Come forth into the meadows, for the Spring
Hath clad the Earth with verdure once again,
And tearful April's soft and tender rain
Hath moistened the dry banks, and violets fling
Abroad their odorous sweets, and elf-shapes bring
Flowerets from Fairy-land and strew the plain,
And the blythe birds with many a jocund strain
Of music make the budding woodlands ring:

Come forth into the fields, O love of mine!

And let us spend a gleeful holiday;

The gemlike dewdrops hang from every spray,

The morning sun shines out with beams benign

To welcome us, O come dear Love away,

And let us walk and talk, and dream of things divine!

April, 1858.

LIX.

Ort have I wandered in the land of dream,
And many a pleasant landscape have I seen,
Sea-marge, and mountain range, and vallies green
Where ripples on in joyance many a stream,
Dancing and glittering 'neath the warm young beam
Cast through the haze of vision. I have been
In realms where Fancy has her fair demesne,
And held high converse with the fays supreme,
Lords of the lute and lyre. But none so dear
To me, as one sweet solitary nook,
Where Love leans moodily on shepherd crook,
And breathes his soft complainings on the air,
Or, sagely musing o'er Fate's riddle-book,
The secret wins of many an after-year.

LX.

O LEAVE the wine-cup and the clamorous jar
Of tongues and roystering revel which delight
The lewd profaners of the hallowed Night,
And hie with me into the fields afar
Where we will stand and watch the latest star
Fade off and die amid the dawning light,
While the awakened Morn with eyes all bright
And high enthroned on her ethereal car
Tracks the wide realm of Heaven. There all is pure
And spotless pleasure reigns; no discord mars
The harmonious anthem echoing round, or bars
The soul from grand imaginings, secure
From every baseborn thought and carking care,
While God, in still communion, meets her there.

LXI.

O NIGHTINGALE! in leafy covert long. Too long, in tones of mournful melancholy, Thy lay to sorrow hast thou given wholly, So like a tale of tender lover's wrong, Until the very spirit of thy song Hath made me half in love with grief. Ah, folly! Now change thy tune and warble something jolly, To chase away these moody thoughts that throng My brain with maudlin fancies. Oh, forego, But for one little hour, thy sadder strain, And in a song of joyance overflow! But if thou still wilt take delight in pain, I cannot choose but stay and hark, for, oh! 1856. Thy music lends so sweet a spell to woe.

LXIL

Sweet is the morn, the light lark carols clear, The sunshine overspreads the farthest view, And only, in the else unspotted blue, One soft white cloud is drifting through the air And seems to beckon us away to strange And fairy regions, far beyond the beams Of earthly skies, the distant land of dreams; Come forth with me, my Emma! let us range The meadows, skirt the woodlands and upclimb The downs and drink the healthy morning breeze, And give light rein to fondest phantasies, Memories evoked by songs of Eld sublime, Dreams of enchanted barks on magic seas, Far seas beyond the utmost reach of Time.

1855.

LXIII. OFT have I mingled in the strifes of men, With many a bitter pang of heart and mind, Out of the Love I bear to humankind, Yet oftentimes, alas! have striven in vain; For men are purblind, and the greed of gain Hath turned them from the simple love of truth, And banished from the world all touch of ruth, And the high royalty of Justice slain. Out of the world 'tis sweet to come, once more, To Nature and forget what grief hath been, Rambling through many an old familiar scene

Of wold and woodland, marsh and rivershore, Hamlet, and orchard slope, and village green, Haunts that my childhood loved in days of yore. 1855.

LXIV.

THE POET'S PIC-NIC.

We loitered on for three delicious hours
Amid a varied landscape; sun and shade
Soft pictures to the eye alike displayed:
At length, deep in the distant woodland bowers,
Down by the margin of a babbling brook,
We spread our rustic meal, and, wild with glee,
Feasted and talked beneath the hazel tree:
Our meal concluded, from an ancient book
Of English songs we read of Robin Hood,
Of merry Sherwood's forest minstrelsy,
And fed our fancies, till from every tree
Forms started into life and lustihood:
Slowly the Night came down and warned us to return.—
Alas! But few such days hath Life's funereal urn!

LXV.

COMPOSED AT THE SOUTH WEST PROMONTORY OF HAYLING ISLAND, OPPOSITE CUMBERLAND FORT.

Within a league of the huge populous town,
How sweet to me this perfect solitude!
Though here are but a length of sand-hills rude,
And the wild warren, treeless bare and brown;
But from these hillocks what fair prospect shown,
On either hand with beauty feasts the eyes,
Or where, like a vast lake, the harbour lies
Outspread, walled in by heights of purple down,
That rise upon the North and bound the view;
Or where, far to the South, the gleaming Sea
Enthrals the sense with his glad minstrelsy
Of waves, that curl beneath the boundless blue,
And singing aye, the expanding soul imbue
With thoughts of God, and Heaven and Immortality.
Iuly, 1880.

LXVI.

SUGGESTED BY AUGUSTIN PAJOU'S CELEBRATED PIECE OF SCULPTURE "LA REINE MARIE ANTOINETTE ET LE PREMIER DAUPHIN."

ILL-FATED Queen, who with a mother's pride
Cradlest thine innocent babe within thine arms!
I gaze admiring on thy sculptured charms,
Lovely as Kupris risen from out the tide.

Ah woe! that, for such grace, the years should hide
A doom of anguish, horror and alarms!
How happy couldst thou, with the child that warms
The mother's instincts in thy breast, have died!
For gazing on thy beauty, hapless Queen!
My mind perforce dwells on that later day,
Which saw thee mewed within the grim Abbaye;
Or that which brought the hideous closing scene,
When thy royal head, beneath the guillotine,
From the sweet form dissevered bleeding lay.

1880.

LXVII.

A STATESMAN'S LAST WORDS.

They were his latest words—"I am o'erwhelmed."
What was it, then, that Death revealed to him,
As to this passing world his eyes grew dim,
And opened on the view of objects realmed
In God's Eternal Light? Ah! Did there rise
The thought of actual failure in success
So splendidly achieved? The littleness
Of all the earthly fame and dignities
Which he had sought and won? Or flashed intense
Upon the soul the sense of vain mistake
In the ambitious dreams that lured him on
Through statecraft, tricksome policy, pretence?
Who knoweth?—Only from his lips outbrake,
"I am o'erwhelmed!"—Then sank his mortal sun!

1881.

LXVIII.

FAIR star, that riseth on the lonely night,

Cresting the abysmal blackness with thy ray, Trembling, emerging at the close of day
Upon the realm of gloom, thou constant, bright
Inhabitant of darkness! thy pure light
To me is emblem of the glowing flame,
That bursts upon the worn life-wanderer's sight,
When sick of toil and unaccomplished aim,
With anguished heart and spirit trouble-tried,
He reaches forth appealing hands to Heaven,
And dying feels new strength and solace given,
The glance of God o'erhangs the dismal void,
While Faith, that orbed not in his daylight sky,
Now beams prophetic of Eternity.

LXIX

OH! why delay thy footsteps, Brother mine? Why waste thy day upon the idle beach, Attracted by the pebbles in thy reach Cast forth as worthless by the scornful brine?

Why linger listening to the syren song,

That ceaseless murmurs mong the mystic caves, Borne by the breeze across the unresting waves?

Oh Brother, on thy journey speed along!

Dusk Eve approaches, Night will soon be here. The gale is wroth, the winds begin to howl, Among the neighbouring wilds hyenas prowl, And in the woods the leopards have their lair,

They wait the night to roam in search of prey, 1852. The twilight gathers round, thy home is far away!

LXX.

THINE oracles, O God! are manifold. O'er Nature's ample page, where'er I gaze, Her Maker's might and majesty and praise, As by a thousand eloquent tongues, are told; Sun, moon, and stars, forests, fields, flowers unfold Thy wisdom's deep design, yet here I trace But portions only of Thy marvellous ways, A mightier wonder on my mind is rolled, When from Thy works I travel to Thy Word;

For there the truth they never could disclose, Radiant with light upon my spirit flows, That He, whose voice at first to being stirred The void eterne and the vast fabric wove,

Sovereign of all, on all smiles with Immortal Love. 1861.

In holy hour, when on my soul, like balm Falls the sweet peace of God, my thoughts above This evil world soar on the wings of love, To that high land where rolls the eternal psalm, By angel voices anthemned; all the strife And petty cares and meannesses forgot That here abound, as tho', I knew them not,

I breathe the breath of a diviner life:

Then seems the eye of Faith the folding air To rend and concentrate her ravished gaze On Him, whom all Heaven's hosts unceasing praise, And lo! my Saviour sits enthronëd there,

With the same gentle human form he wore, When on the Cross for me my sins He bore. 1863.

LXXII.

METHINKS 'twere sweet, in rural vale retired,
The Country Pastor's noiseless life to lead,
And watch the still years one by one recede,
While Heaven grows daily nearer: aye untired,
From the Great Book of Truth with spirit fired
By Love Divine, the village mind to feed;
And by perpetual prayer to win the meed
Of promised blessing. More to be desired
Were this for destiny, than all the praise
That follows in the wake of famous men:
Free from heart-burning strife and envious pain,
Thus would I live my unambitious days,
Intent alone the smile of God to gain,
And leave the great world to the world's own ways.

April, 1858.

LXXIII.

Though here on Earth beset on every hand
With perils is the Christian's upward path,
And foes unnumbered gather round in wrath,
His faith assailing; yet even as the sand,
Lifted and blown for leagues above the waste,
By the strong wind, so are they scattered far
By God's avenging breath, whose ceaseless care
Regards his saints, who wills not that the least
Of all his servants suffer harm. My soul
Exult! This God is thine; his hand upholds
Thy faltering steps, and his large love infolds
Thy languishing affection, and though all
The Earth unite, from distant pole to pole,
1856. To work thy ruin, yet thou shalt not fall.

LXXIV.

"IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE ARE MANY MANSIONS."

OH glorious thought; that from this prison-house.
The enfranchised soul, her every fetter riven,
Bound on immortal flight, will soar to Heaven,
And taste the never-ending joy that flows,
A timeless stream whose constant current knows
No fluctuations, from beneath the throne
Of the Eternal One; nor there alone
To drink unshared delights, but be with those

Of every tribe and kindred who have found Redemption through the Lamb, a crowding throng A host innumerable, who prolong

From starry court to court of Praise the sound: Oh glorious thought! to know that I shall share Their bliss, amid those many mansions there. 1858.

LXXV.

TO THE SPIRIT OF MY DREAMS.

ART thou a spirit, that, in dreams at night, Comest to me in sleep, with soul-like glance, With smiles and angel-beaming countenance, And lead'st me forth into a land of light? All day, a weight upon my nerves and mind, I wander through the world, like one in pain, The aspiring thought held fast in captive chain, And long this house of clay to leave behind; But when night comes, it falls, we walk abroad Together, communing of many things, I dare not breathe even in whisperings. The mighty wonders of the City of God:— Oh, happy life, that knowest such visitings, Such glimpses given of angel-neighbourhood!

1858.

LXXVI.

O CHILD of sin and sorrow, wandering far Beyond the utmost verge of heaven-born light! O way-worn wanderer, whom the shades of Night Have overtaken, while no guiding star Shines out above to light thee to thy goal, Exploring the dark waste in fruitless quest, Fain wouldst thou shelter somewhere, fain wouldst

And gain an hour of quiet for thy soul. Take courage weary pilgrim! Yonder mark, Distant and dim, glimmers a little light, One little beam of hope amid the Night To guide thy trembling footsteps through the dark; Oh! thither speed thee and a rest implore, Thou wilt not plead in vain for Jesus guards the door.

LXXVII..

Thou Idler in the world, whoe'er thou art,
That lov'st in selfish sensuous ease to dwell,
Beguiling Time with dreams that please thee well,
Voluptuous forms perchance of Grecian Art,
Or dulcet-ditties of enamoured bard,
Or rural home embosomed among trees,
Where fountains scatter spray upon the breeze
And greyhounds gambol on the grassy sward;
Or, it may be, soothed by luxurious sound
Of harp or organ or of human voice,
Awake thou craven from the grovelling ground,
And make at once a new and better choice!
Thy time, thy wealth are not thine own, and God
Will judge thee for thy use of gifts bestowed.

LXXVIII.

How shall I find apt words to praise my God?

How tune a fitting strain to celebrate
His mercies showered on me from Heaven-gate,
The choicest blossoms of redeeming blood?
Lo! in His presence Man is stricken dumb,
The art, the poetry, the eloquence
That please the idle ear of human sense
Are but vain pastime here. Yet will I come
Before thy throne, O God! and from my store
Of gratitude such as I have will offer,
Knowing that He, who blest the widow's proffer
Of her two mites, requireth nothing more.
My God I owe thee all, and though thou claim
My all and I all give, I still thy debtor am.

1856.

1856.

LXXIX.

TO A DEAR AND VALUED FRIEND, ON HIS RECOVERY FROM A DANGEROUS ILLNESS.

Up from the gates of Death, by Him restored
To life, Who plucked from Death the envenom'd sting,
Dear Friend, with thee our unfeigned praise we bring,
And bow in gratitude, before the Lord.
O be His love, His tenderness adored!—
Around thy bed we formed a weeping ring,
Expecting soon to see thy soul take wing,
And reft in twain the frail and brittle cord

That bound thee still to Earth: We knelt and prayed, Tearful we prayed, that yet thy God would spare A life so precious; and lo! at our prayer, Death with his arrow pointed stood dismayed; And the Great Lord of Death gave back to thee Life at the grave's mouth, and my friend to me. March, 1865.

LXXX.

'Tis well that with Affliction, hand in hand. Through life our pilgrimage we here pursue, Else Heaven itself might fail our heedless view And the high promise of that far-off land; Too easily content our all to stake Upon the vanities within our reach, Forgetful of the spirit's finer make And true vocation. With stern hand, to teach To man the purpose of Existence, comes Affliction, dissipates his dearest dreams, And casts a cloud o'er Fortune's brightest beams, And leads him weeping through a place of tombs; By sad Experience bids him to be wise, And lift his hopes from Earth to centre in the skies. 1855.

LXXXI.

COMPLAINT ANSWERED. THE SINNER'S

How heavy burdened is my heart; my grief O'erflows her chalice, and my spirit seeks Relief in tears that still refuse relief, Though channel follows channel down my cheeks, And mine eyes ache with weeping. Woe is me! I am weighed down, and who shall lift me up? And who shall pour the cordial in my cup, Release me of my load, and set me free? My sins do haunt, like spectres of the night, . My steps where'er I tread, and evil Fate Still points me to the torments that await

My ultimate lot, and rends me with affright; Hope is shut out from me on every side;

Where shall I look for safety?

ESUS DIED.

LXXXII.

O Pilgrim through Life's narrow vale! from whom The radiant light, that cheered thee on thy way,

Hath for awhile withdrawn its genial ray,

Though darkness round thee spreads its threatening gloom, Let not despair thy trembling hopes entomb;

For if with reverence meek thou dost essay

His sacred Word and precepts to obey

Whose smile seems hidden from thee, nor presume

To cavil at His dealings, thou shalt find

'Mid every mystery, Love is working still Some good for thee determined by His Will,

Some merciful result by Grace designed;

Oh, stay thy soul's deep trust in Him, until The end fulfilled shall prove the purpose kind! 1866.

LXXXIII.

ISAIAH lxvi. 13.

A MOTHER'S love only a mother knows, Who feels it gushing from her heart's warm cell,

Like lavish waters which into the dell A brooklet, fed upon the mountain, throws.

A brooklet, fed upon the mountain, throws Toward von babe that into sweet repose

She rocks upon her breast, ah! who can tell The unutterable sympathies which well

From that fond mother's bosom? But thus flows

The boundless love, the sympathy Divine

Of Him who reigns on high, to mortals here; As unto her that babe, to Him are dear

The souls who trustful to His Word resign

Their Faith, and 'gainst them tho' the world combine,
He for their help and comfort will appear.

1866.

LXXXIV.

ON THE ANCIENT NAME OF GOSPORT.

Gop's Port, thine ancient honourable name!

I pray that all thy dwellers may be such,

That whosoever at this port may touch Shall say of them, these people do not shame

Their nomenclature: thus thy noble fame

Should travel thro' the world and need no crutch,

Nor any rival fear, however much

The wealth, fame, power of neighbouring towns became.

Townsmen, be this your emprize! not to press
Those efforts only that bring wealth to flow
Into your coffers; also strive to grow
In wisdom, piety, and righteousness;
Then will the smile of Heaven your households bless,
And our town's name the world still as God's Port shall
know.

1863.

LXXXV.

AGAINST BIGOTRY.

I see not with thine eyes, nor thou with mine;
Each mind, a world, doth its own orbit run,
And gravitate to its peculiar sun
In the wide heaven of knowledge. The Divine
Creator, when He bade His light to shine,
Shed not its bright effulgence forth in one,
But in a myriad liquid beams. Oh shun
The cramping self-conceit that would confine
All judgment and opinion to its own,
And circumscribe within some narrow creed
The whole of Truth! That, which sufficeth thee
May scarce contribute to another's need;
God hath diffused boundless variety,
Matter and Mind alike, through all Creation.

188o.

LXXXVI.

How, like the hours of some sweet Summer's day,
Insensibly my years have glided by,
And, like the twilight mantling o'er the sky,
Age unawares creeps on me, and with grey
Sprinkling my locks, reminds me that the way
I follow, henceforth valley-ward must lie,
Where Night and Death are waiting: Natheless, I
In spirit, thought, and fancy feel as gay,
Oftimes, as though my youth were with me still,
And I had never known a grief or care,
And Life had all her story to unfold;
For Nature, portioning her gifts at will

To men, hath kept this one endowment rare For poets, of a heart that grows not old.

1885.

THE LOVER'S LAMENT.

I.

On thou great Queen! whose praise of late I told In royal verse,* fitting thy royal splendour, Descend as thou wert wont in days of old, Inspire me, whilst I hymn a theme more tender Than such as I have strung to wilder numbers; For I am weary of my stronger passion, I would dwell aye with soothing Contemplation, Or dream away my life in golden slumbers:

Mine is no more the frantic rhapsody,
The wizard hath his wizardry forsaken,
And now he walks with grave Philosophy,
Like one to sterner purpose just awaken;

And Calm went ever hand in hand with Sorrow.

His early day hath blended with sad morrow,

Small joy hath been the crown of thy desire,
O Poesy! thou bear'st a heavy burden;
Stern worker thou, thine is the slave's attire;
Nor can I bring to thee a richer guerdon;
Once did I think to hymn, in praise of thee,
A joy-song; but when I did seem most cheerful,
Thy own sad spirit did steal over me,
The better cheer from streaming eyes ran tearful.
And now that I would sing a song of woe,
Dissolving my great sorrow in my lay,
I ask for sadder influences, so
The greater grief may seem to steal away
Identity, and make my song unreal,
And Woe take pleasure in the calm ideal.

III.

For Man is born to Woe; and who can thrid
The maze of undelight, so well as he
To whom to set the days to song 'tis bid?
Woe is the tale of all humanity:
And the same sadness broodeth in all Nature,
To eyes of man, since loss of Eden-glory;
Woe, woe, ever the same dark endless story,
Written in characters of strange misfeature.

So woe is made divine by omnipresence.

The great prefigurement of man's salvation,

'Tis sacrifice alone blots out the sense,

The bitter sense of our world's desolation: We are made pure by sorrow; flow sweet tide Of blood and water from the Saviour's side!

IV.

There was a perfect Love and perfect Woe,—Ah, Love and Woe are seldom disunited!

My own great suffering should teach me so;

The richer fruit is fruit which hath been blighted.

What dream is this that magnifies my sorrow?

Ah, miser Memory hoards up Love's bequest!

Nor can my song forget, awhile, to borrow The early spirit of sweet Youth's unrest.

For Love did strive with Love, and Love o'ercame,

And Beauty did cast off Love's brotherhood,

All for the sake of Love's sweet other name, 'Twas Duty brake the common Motherhood:

Those last sad words, the breaking heart addrest The cruel one, still linger in my breast.

V.

I cannot sever from this tender bliss,

I cannot chase my soul away. Believe me Thou who dost bid me take a parting kiss,

Love is too strong, I cannot so bereave me;

Oh! might I ever hang upon thy lips,

In deepest heart of love their honey hiving,

I would the busy hoarding bee eclipse,

Kiss all my life and ne er grow tired of living; Ne'er sated with my bosom's tender anguish,

Till I had taught thy very pride to love me;

As stars that o'er the drooped midnight languish,

Reft of their scorn thine eyes should dote above me, And look unutterable things, and thou

Shouldst not say kiss and leave me, then as now!

VI.

And yet the tender chord was reft in twain,

She knew her task and of sweet love bereft her:

Ah! Love entreated Love, but all in vain;

'Twas kiss and leave me, and he kissed and left her! O breaking heart, swell up in this proud bosom,

Thy haughty woe shall seem to scorn the scorner!

Bloom little bud in full magnolia blossom! Love weep no more, let Duty be the mourner! Come, thou and I, like bees upon the wing, No more to Sorrow give the lagging hours,

But let us joy awhile mong groves of Spring,

Then drink of Death and dose among the flowers; There will be little grief in such a sleeping, Only the living can give life to weeping.

VII

Now Earth puts on her holiday attire, And blushing like a maiden at her bridal, Whose cheeks betray the joy of her desire, She tasks herself to lure the young and idle

Spring, as impatient of his long delay;

And when he comes she clasps him to her bosom, And archly chides his lingering on the way,

Then gifts him with her sweetest, earliest blossom. Ah! well, I ween, she loves the blythe new-comer, But changefulness is oft of Love begotten.

There's danger lurking in the glance of Summer, And the boy-love will soon be half forgotten;

The growth of Summer falls neath Autumn's sickle; Heigho! but Woman's heart is very fickle.

VIII.

Out in the fields we half forget to grieve, So softly smiling seems the face of Heaven, There, in one costly fabric, could I weave A thousand thoughts, and deem all sin forgiven, And Life as entered on her brighter day.

There all seems set to music. One great song Rises from Nature's depths ;—Ah! Where away?— Whose is the charm to harmonise the throng

Of choristers? O Nature! Mother dear! How sweet to hear thee in the waterfall.

Singing at early summer of the year,

Or, where lush grapes hang ripening from the wall, To watch thee brim thy golden cup or hark The night-birds soothe thee, warbling in the dark!

IX.

O Sorrow! ever when my thought would stray Mid Lethe bowers, that lie beyond thy track, And dwell amid oblivious shades, away From thee and thine, why wilt thou hold me back? I love thee not, thou art a cruel bride,
Thou mockest Love and Love's sharp agony,
Thy very calm is scornful; Woe is me!
My grief crowns Grief, and doth itself deride.
O Memory! wherefore wilt thou ever reign
Amid the chambers of my heart? Vile ghost
Of buried Love, of Happiness long lost!
O Memory! why the poppied draught disdain?
O Death! why tarry, when thy stroke I crave?
For Grief is buried with us in the grave!

X.

"Only the living can give life to weeping."

Who told thee that the dead of grief were ridden? Strange trouble comes in dreams unto the sleeping,
The greater grief is ever darkest hidden.
How the pulse quivers at the thought of Death,
As vexed with strange presentiment of evil!
What mighty horror lieth underneath?
Dead calm is wildest minstrel of the revel!
Oh, that the Dead might speak unto the living
And the dim secret of the grave reveal!
Nay! Death, too soon to Life the knowledge giving,
Thy sod with richer growth of flowers conceal!
For who could then die happy on his bed,

Go down and meet the dead? Oh are they dead? XI. They sleep, they are not dead, they do but dream Of sweet oblivion and vanished life; They find in slumbers respite from the strife That girt them round. Still the Lethean stream Shall bear them forward to the latter day, Like freightless helmless barks that play awhile Unconsciously upon the waves; the smile Of Life is still upon them, and for aye It shall exist, and Death be but a thing Of fancy-woven texture. When the roar Of the last trump shall sound, and the Dread King Shall come in judgment throned and robed with awe, Of these shall be the great awakening, Their Lethe-dreams and death-sleep be no more. XII.

There's one lies dead and buried, and his grave Is here. Can sorrow vex the lifeless dust?

Behold, the little daisies, as they wave
Amid the breeze, seem conscious of their trust,
Meek guardians of the dead and the dead woe,
With their pale faces drooping on the sod
As though they whispered the wild grief below
A little thought of comfort. Hush! Hath God
Not girt about Great Death with mystery?
And shalt thou tear the hallowed veil aside?
Nay, dream of Death as 'twere a dream of joy;

Twere fitter thy own foolish grief to hide Than other learn.—That other who can know? Oh, Life or Death the burden still is woe!

XIII.

Oh, how I loved her! with what deep devotion, Too weak are these poor human words to tell; Dim recollections of a past emotion,

These songs but hide their buried grief too well:

And I could weep, but that my grief hath grown

Cold as a winter-thought with these long years,

And I am old wouth's is the joy of tears

And I am old, youth's is the joy of tears, Oh life so sad, so tearless and alone! Alone? ah, would that I were all forlorn!

But these wild thoughts for aye companion me, My life is vexed with promise of a morn

That cometh not, but mocks my misery. Still life, still grief, dark shape of traitor Love,—And still the One calm watching eye above.

XIV.

Ah me! unhappy that I am! No more
In honeyed rest to passion up my heart,
Love hath grown cold with years, set wide the door,
And let the changeling wander forth apart!
Now enter Sorrow at the empty ruin,
Exultingly survey the wreck around,
Where Love once pleasured witness Love's undoing,
The festal cups lie shattered on the ground.
Oh, for some sultry draught of southern wine
To steep the senses in forgetfulness!
Oh, for some sleepy shade of sweet recline,
Where I might all forget my heart's distress!
Vain hope! Hath sorrow tended unto folly?
Death is the only cure for melancholy.

XV.

Yet, why for ever weep and waste thy tears?
Why lavish life on woe? a truce to sorrow!
Let laughter crown the cup of coming years,

And when thy all is squandered, go and borrow!

Nor deem thy hope is dead, but gone astray:

Nor deem that passion will for aye discard thee; There's many a lagging pleasure on the way,

And many a mistress yet that will regard thee.

Go, join the revel, maddest of the throng;
Drain the red grape till thy old blood grow heated;

Entice thy fancy with some ribald song;

Though Love be dead, there's Lust will be entreated; Ah well! Though sweet may be the wanton measure, Yet sin is at the best but bitter pleasure.

XVI.

Talk not of drowning sorrow in the bowl,
Here riots but the mockery of gladness;

Oh! better like a girl to weep thy soul

Away in tears, than hazard in thy madness

The peerless purchased gem.—Go, wanderer weeping, Yet strong for all thy tears! Full many a foe

Usurps the way; then triumph in thy woe; God hath thee yet within his gracious keeping!

Destroy the Anarch! gird thee up in pride,

A man for all thy trouble! See the way Broadens, and fairer gleams the opening day,

And Heaven is all aglow, and far and wide
The shout upswells, and the seraphic throng,

Ope arms and clasp !—Sore tempted, yet be strong.

XVII.

Ah, cease the strain of grief! why, why, for ever, Thy fancies give to one such idle theme?

Oh, know that Life is not as all a dream! But breast the current of the rushing river.

Against the downward tide move on, brave bark!

There lies full many a happy islet-cove,

Where put to land whene'er the night grows dark, And trust His grace who watches from above.

So stricken Love shall gather tenfold force,

In the fair morn, calm noon, and fading even;

And thou shalt reach at length the streamlet's source And rest with God upon the shores of Heaven;

Where Love shall dash all sorrows from his eyes,—
1853. There may not any grieve in Paradise.

The Reverie of John Milton.

I.

OLD, blind and poor, men deem me stricken down Beneath the avenging malison of Heaven, And point at me with scornful hand, as one Branded a mark for shame, meet guerdon given For ceaseless labour and a life well-spent In service of my country. Yet not this Affects the conscious soul, that never bent A moment from the unbroken line of right; For I have followed in the steps of Truth, Where'er her guiding form hath led, or bright Or drear the way, even from my earliest youth; Nor shrank from shadows of calamities That loomed before me, as thy would divert From her design the free aspiring mind. I have been ever that I seemed, this heart A stranger to the fraud and artifice Of weak and craven souls; nor proffered bait Nor lure of power had ever force to bind Me, proof alike 'gainst hope of bribe and dread Of threatened penalty; yea I have borne A conscience true, a spirit free and torn Aside the cunning mask contrived to hide The hideous cheeks of wrinkled Tyranny; And sought, I deem with no unholy pride, To write my name in words that cannot die, Words that were deeds, deeds done to serve the state, And trod where coward footsteps dared not tread.

II.

Old, blind and poor—Ay! let me add forsaken!—
The parasites, (it was not unforeseen,)
That wooed and flattered once with honeyed words
Till my soul sickened with disgust, like birds
Of summer-time, when woods are fair and green,
Who trill and sing, but, when the leaves are shaken
By winds of Autumn to the ground, take flight
To other climes, now that my winter night
Of bleak adversity hath cast her shade,

Have left me to my solitude and trade
For favour from the Stuart, with my name
Uttered in ribald jest. Yet have I known
Friends leal and true, but some before the Throne
Already join the angelic minstrelsy,

Nor care for human praise or human blame;
And others dwell afar, beyond the sea,
Poer exiles from the land they toiled to save;
While I in penury, reproach and shame,

Like a changed leaf, am withering for my grave.

III.

Old, blind, poor and forsaken! Yet not all The base ingratitude of men, the storms Of adverse fate can bend the iron will, Nor aught of suffering the free heart appal, Unmoved, undaunted and unfettered still; Nerved by that high communion which informs The soul with light and life from Heaven. 'Tis noble to endure for the Truth's sake, Though eager Hope die crushed upon the wheel Of torturing Destiny, and the glad wave Of buoyant life crested with sunlight break, Stranded upon the inhospitable rock, Nor touch the golden sands: the rudest shock I can defy, so that I bear within A sense that hears, above the little din Of worldly tongues, the approving whisper given, The conscious uttered oracle of heaven. 'Tis this exalts the Man: but this I crave, And though by thousand tempests all be riven And strewn to which I clung, it cannot shake The soul's serenity: amid the wreck She smiles upon misfortune, dares be brave, Cleaves to the right and scorns to cringe a slave.

IV.

I mourn not for myself, that were indeed
To nurse the sorrows of a craven mind;
But ah! I mourn the fresh-forged chains that bind
Thy heart my native land. That thou shouldst bleed
Again beneath the knife of Tyranny,

By traitor hands to that false race betrayed Who wrought thy woe; oh I do inly weep!

Thine altars overturned sweet Liberty!
Banished thine island-fane, divinest maid!

Through the erst happy temple-space now creep All loathsome venomous things of reptile breed.

Now write we Ichabod on all our walls,

For oh! the glory hath departed quite; Truth, Virtue, Godliness, all sense of Right Fled when the Stuart came: and now our halls, That echoed with the sturdy yeoman's voice

Of God-born potency, are made lewd homes
Of the vile panders to the sensual king,
Who plunged in harlotry and banquetting
A nation's anguish mocks with drunken noise.
Oh for the men I loved to burst their tombs,

And once again unsheathe the unrusted sword! Slumbers Eternal Justice? God arise And flash thy lightening on thine enemies! Take vengence on thine adversaries O Lord!

V

Can I forget the glorious days that came Enrobed in sunlight sheen and made our land Queenlike and beautiful?—from strand to strand Were borne the wondrous tidings of our fame,

Were borne the wondrous tidings of our fame, And Europe bowed in homage at our name,

While England 'mong the nations sat supreme, The elect of Heaven, anointed of her God

To teach the art of righteous government To neighbouring states, and visit punishment On realms of crime that long provoked His rod.

Can I forget, how like a marvellous dream,
Oh! fairer far than beauty's fabled queen

Sprung from her Paphian wells, august and grand Freedom arose, and glorified our land,

And vanquished hoary wrongs that long had been Enthroned in court and hall and sanctuary?

Can I forget the music of her voice

Borne to my raptured soul across the sea, Roaming the classic shores of Italy, Inspiring memories of the ancient Time, Communing with the hero-souls sublime Of Bard and Tribune; weaving many a lay Of stately measure, musing on my way?

But ah! that wooing sound my wavering choice Determined to return; I came and flung My garnered wealth of mind upon the shrine
Of Liberty, and wrought with potent pen,
(Pen mightier than the swords of many men,)
To aid her triumphs, and the death-knell rung
In burning speech of all her tyrant-foes;
For aye were foes of Freedom counted mine.
Ah vain! Her beautiful, brief reign is o'er!
Dead and entombed she will revive no more,
The traitor clasps his wealth, the tyrant mocks our woes,
Alas! that such a dream should end with such a close!

VI.

To-night I sit within my lonely room, And in regretful memories that recal The vanished days, a melancholy joy I find, strange pleasure wrapt in hues of gloom. For Reverie with weird hand uplifts the pall Of coffined greatness, and my thoughts employ Their leisure to trace out, through the dim air, The sinewy shape of him who like a king, (Albeit he would ne'er the name assume,) Wielded the helm of state and piloting The vessel with firm hand to harbour fair. Through shrieking blast and storm, in splendour trod The golden stairs of Power, and stablished right Upon the judgment-seat; and pressing on, The path of triumph bore him to a throne, When grandly, as he gained the topmost height, He looked still higher and bowed the knee to God. O Cromwell! Great in council and in war, Greater in virtue and humility, Canst thou behold our nation from afar. Art thou still bound by links of sympathy To our down-sunken land?—O, could'st thou see The blighting change, the dread reverse and mark The crowned caitiff, on his throne, and hark Their loud lewd revels, 'twere enough to wring Thy starry soul with anguish, even there;

And midst Heaven's jubilee thy face would wear The lines of grief: or else methinks 'twould bring Thy spirit from the skies to earth again, To draw upon our foes the anointed brand,

And drive the godless heathen from the land;
Would thou wert here, Great Heart and Iron Hand!
That were a proud day.—But desire is vain.

VII.

"Desire is vain,"—Yea! as regards the dead, No wish of ours can bring them back to life, Once hushed the beating heart, no more they tread The tangled pathways here of human strife,

No longer seek the aims we seek, all aim

For ever swallowed up of the great joy

Born of the soul's complete enfranchisement. But ah! their deeds live on, they cannot die;

Above their sepulchres a quenchless flame

Burns Hope's prophetic ray, and still unspent Abides the influence of the good and great, By which, they being dead still serve the state. Tho' vain indeed the wish would bid them rise

From their cold graves, not vain the wish for thee My country! Brief their triumphing shall be Who revel in thy shame and misery;—

Thou shalt awake from thy captivity.

Oh not in vain the valiant memories

Of the grand Past still haunt thy present gloom!

As with the spirit of swift prophecy My mind is stirred, and I behold afar,

Of the false Stuart race, the baneful star Set lurid in the wrathful waves of doom.

I hear the shouts which hail the auspicious morn Of glad-returning Liberty, and through

The fields of distant Time I travel on; Morn broadens into noon, and fair to view, The monarch to the people loyal and true,

The people strong in freedom nobly won Allied in love unto the throne: Outworn

All petty feud, mean spite and bigot hate, Outworn all strife of sects and rash upbraiding, But one desire all hearts and minds pervading,

The wish to serve and to preserve the state.

O noble destiny and noble nation!

Secure alike from foreign foes' invading
And civil broil: Hark the exulting pæan:—
"Rejoice, rejoice! Name thou thy gates Salvation

And all thy bulwarks Praise, O favoured nation!"

—Thrice downward pealing from the empyrean!

VII.

A dream!—A phantom by the wizard-spell
Of the mind's sorcery raised to flatter Hope:—

Ah! could I deem beyond the vestibule Of the dim undiscovered Future dwell

Realities so grand of righteous rule,

The still unbaffled soul were armed to cope With all Time's utmost rage, e'en though the years Should bear me fruit of grief a hundred-fold.

And yet the marvellous page of History teems With oft-repeated evidence, that dreams

Born of the poet's mind are harbingers

Of Destiny, and sent of Heaven to mould The fashion of the ages: ah! that mine, The glad event might prove such dream divine! For me, these locks are grey, and I begin,

Stealing upon my heart apace, to feel The growing weariness of life; the wheel

Hath well-nigh told its round, and my poor thread The beldame trine must soon have ceased to spin,

And there are glories argent overhead, That earth's imperfect visions far outshine. But ere I go, methinks the old man's hand

Hath vigour yet to sweep the sacred lyre;

I feel return upon me the old fire
I felt in my glad youth, before the land

Was filled with strife: Outrolls a wondrous scene

To the rapt gaze of Poesy, and I

Though late,—too late perchance,—an epic strain Of man's first loss, of man's immortal gain,

Hymned in immortal numbers fain would try: A song perchance that may the hearts engage

Of men in some hereafter nobler age, Such as I dreamed of singing in the days

Of yore, "My God! to justify thy ways" Moving thro' deeps of mystery to men;

One, too, that shall remember them of him

Who wrought and toiled forthem till Light grew dim And sight these eyeballs fled.—God give me strength, and when

My task is done, then let me die serene, And lie down with the flowers and leaflets green!

Mumorous and Satirical Pieces.

PUTTING UP THE BANNS.

Two brothers in a Northern village, Had wealthy grown on flocks and tillage, For both were prudent men and thrifty, And on the shady side of fifty, So like they were to one another, Brother might well have passed for brother.

Alike in form and face and tone, They differed but in this alone, Thomas for years had had a wife, While John lived still a single life.

Tom's wife was gentle, loving, kind,
Suited exactly to his mind,
So pleasantly his days ran on,
He often pitied lonely John.

"How is it Jack,"—he said one day, As they were walking by the way,— "That thoo saw long thasen has carried, And never thowt o' gettin' married?"

"How is it," John replied, "Loord saäve me, I doänt knaw any one 'ud haäve me."
"Not haäve thee, Jack! there's Martha Broon, Tha knaws as lives a'top o'toon, A booncin', booxom Daäme as any, And knaws to toorn and saäve a penny. Sheä's joost thoine age, I've 'eer'd it said, And her goodman has noo beän deäd Foor year, an' Martinmas coom roond, Sheä'd haäve tha' gladly, I'll be boond."

"Dos't think sheä will?" his brother cried, "Think! naw I'se sewer on't," Tom replied. "Whoy then," says John, "I weänt delaäy, I'll goa put oop the banns to-daäy."

This purpose settled in his mind, Away he went the clerk to find, Who wrote the intended marriage down, Between John Stubbs and Martha Brown; And further, be it briefly said, In church the banns were duly read.

On Monday, Martha said her prayers, And drest herself and came down stairs, Her breakfast ate of eggs and pork, Then set about her daily work.

When, in the midst of household labour, She saw drop in her next-door neighbour, Who said:—"Whoy Martha is it thrue They tell aboot John Stoobs and thoo? From hoose to hoose the news is carried, That you're boath goan to be married."

"Naw, naw, tha silly thing, be easy! I think the folks are growin' craazy, Or else thoo's got tha noddle broaken, Whoy John and I haave hardly spoaken."

"Well, but the banns I 'eer wur reäd."
"Banns reäd! reäd wheer?" poor Martha said.
The gossip answered with some scorn,
"Reäd? Whoy in choorch but yeäster moorn,
And that thoo knaws I do na' doot it.
Oänly tha' are so sloy aboot it."

Thereat a second neighbour came,
And soon a third and each the same
Strange question asked and tidings brought,
Till Martha, quite confounded thought
The thing was getting past a joke,
And rather angrily she spoke;—
"You've all coom heäre, I plaänely seeä,
To troy and maäke a fool o'meeä,
But noo I've summat else to do
Than leästen to such stoops as you,
Saw you may e'en joost step awaäy,
And keäp your jests till All Fool's Daäy."

Her neighbours gone she thought it o'er But only grew perplexed the more; So put her cloak and bonnet on, And went to have a word with John.

"Whoy John, what's this? I'eer it saäid, That yeästerdaäy the banns wur reäd In choorch, betwixt tha' sen an' meä, I want to know the roights o' theeä."

"And saw the banns wur read," said John,

"Wur read!" said Martha taking on, "Was ever woman woorse deroided?

Whaw put them oop?"—says John—"Whoy I did,"

"Thoo did! I gaäve tha naw permission!"

John found he'd made a slight omission,—"Coom Martha, doänt taäke on," he said, "For thaw the banns in choorch wur reäd, It's not saw bad but weeä can stop it, I'll goä an' tell the clerk to dhrop it."

"Well, naw!" said Martha changing tone,

"Noo that the thing saw fur has goane, And all the folks have 'eered it, John, 1864. I think it may joost e'en goa on!"

The Priest in the Village.*

FOUR ECLOGUES,

Illustrating the great advantage of an Established Church in providing for the Work of the Ministry "an educated gentleman (?) in every parish."

I. LEFT THE MEETIN'.

TOLD BY A RUSTIC.

I.

Why don't I come now to Meetin'? Wot 'ave you done to offend?

Nothin' at all, as I knows on, you've always been like a friend. When I were down wi' the typhus come to my bedside, and prayed;

Tho' they said mebbe you'd ketch it, you wasn't nowise afraid;
Told me them words about Jesus wot touched me, an' did
my heart good,

But come to the Meetin' agin, Sir, I durstn't tho', much as I would.

^{*} The Author presents these poems to the public with no feeling of hostility to his brethren in the Establishment. For

II.

It's all along o' new pairson, wot's come wi' his popery ways Not a bit like the old pairson, wot's gone to his rest, for he says,

"Robert," says he, as he met me one Sunday down here in the lane,

"Why, man, I'm right glad to see you about, lookin' hearty again;

They tell me you go now to Meetin'; well go, Robert, go if you find

As it's theer as you gets the most good, an' don't you suppose I shall mind:

Chapel or Church, it don't matter, my lad, much at which you attend;

Only let's love the Good Lord, we shall all meet in Heaven at the end."

III.

Kind-hearted man, Sir, old pairson, only his preaching were dry,

But in his life he made up for't, an' now he's a dwelling on high;

But young new pairson's a come here, an' like him nowise in the least,

Stuffed up wi' comical notions, just like a papisher priest;
Burns big wax candles by daylight, an' bows down afore 'em,
an' wears

Frippery garments, most like the show-women I've seen up at fairs;

the many devoted men to be found in their ranks he cherishes only esteem and regard. The picture drawn of the Priest in the Village is designed to show the evil effects that may, and do, result from the principle of the Establishment in itself; in the opportunity which it affords for the indulgence of tyranny when the clerical office is lodged in the hands of the arrogant and exclusive bigot. That there is no exaggeration in the picture the notes appended will attest; and for these, and similar instances of oppression continually cropping up in our rural districts, the one effective remedy is to be found in a dissolution of the unscriptural union between the Church and State. The first of these Eclogues appeared in *The Christian Chronicle*, and was reproduced in *The Freeman*; the remaining three were written specially for the columns of *The Freeman*.

Preaches as he can forgive us our sins, an' can turn bits o' bread

Into our Lord's blessed body, an' bids us to pray for the dead; Speaks, too, agin the old pairson, an' says it were time as he went,

And as he's come to the village determined to root up Dissent.

IV.

Here's 'ow he started wi' me: He lifts up my latch an' struts in—

(As the 'the place just were his own)—all stiff an' starched up to his chin;

Arxes me 'ow I spends Sundays, for he thinks as my face he aint seen

Up at church, so I tells him, I goes to the Meetin' House hard by the Green;

Then he flushes all red in the face, an' he glares at me like, wi' a frown.

An' he says, "Now I'm priest o' this parish, I mean that vile place to put down;

It's the hotbed of schism and sin, an' if you'll be guided by me.

You'll nevermore enter those doors." Theer I tells him I couldn't agree,

I meant him nowise disrespect, but 'twas theer I got food for the week.

"Food? Food? my good fellow!" he cries, "No! but horrible poisons, that reek

From the dung-heaps of Hell to pollute and destroy." At that sayin' I warmed,

An' says I, "I'm no schollard, like you, but I knows, Sir, you're just misinformed,

'Tisn't poison 'ud set us on prayin', an' lovin' our Bibles, I think;

'Tisn't poison wot brings us to Christ, an' to give over swearin' an' drink."

V.

Then he draws hissen up to his height, an' says he, "Of this parish I'm priest,

All its souls are put into my hand, from the greatest right down to the least,

As your priest I forbid you to go, any more, to that pestilent den——"

"As to that Sir," says I, "I don't arx leave on you nor take counsel of men,

I've got my own conscience, thank God! an' I lives in the land o' the free."

At that he goes off wi' a sneer-"O, do you? my man! We shall see."

VI.

Next week were the hannial treat o' the village schoolchildren, when all

Go up in their Sunday rig-out to have tea and cake at the Hall.

My own little gals wi' the rest, and lookin' so chubby and clean,

Started out as merry as larks, and like young lambs skipt over the green;

I watched 'em till well out of sight, wi' a blessin' as follered their track.

But hardly an hour they'd been gone, when the darlin's come hurryin' back,

A sobbin' an' cryin' their eyes out; my own filled wi' tears at the sight.

Eh! Sir, but their hearts must be black, as could spoil little children's delight;

My gals, havin' sight o' the feast, had been sent away home in disgrace,

For miladi had told 'em she'd have no meetin'ers theer, at her place.

VII.

My missus belonged to the Provident Club where the members puts by

A shillin' a week, all the year, to pervide for a winter supply Of blankets an' coals; but one mornin,' a pert sarvin' gal o' the Squire's

Brought us back all as we'ud subscribed, as she said by her leddy's desires,

For the missus's name were struck off from the club, as "her leddyship meant,

By the vicar's advice, just to make a clean sweep of our dirty Dissent."

VIII.

But the wust, Sir's to come. Farmer Jones, as I've worked for sin' I were a boy,

Says "Robert, my lad, I's afeared I can't keep you in longer employ.

You've given some downright offence to pairson, an' he a set Squire

Agin you, an' Squire a said I mayn't have you nohow on

hire

I'm mortally sorry; for, Robert, I likes you the best of my men,
But I darn't forfeit Squire's good graces; nay, Bob, I must

look to mysen.

An' you, if you'd keep a roof over your head, p'rhaps won't take it amiss.

If I gives you a morsel of timely advice; an', my lad, it's just this:

Go straightway and humble yoursen to pairson, an' soften his

spite,

Mayhap he'll be friends with you, Robert, an' everythin' yet will come right."

IX.

Well, Sir, I could plainly see how, as pairson intended me ill, Unless as I'd eat 'umble pie, an' tie mysen down to his will; Then I thought o' the bairns and the missus, an' says I to mysen, "It won't do,

Master Bob, as your darlin's should be druv from house an'

home owin' to you,"

And so I makes peace wi' the pairson, an' tells him as I'd come to church,

An' theer I goes every Sunday, an' sees him stuck up in his perch,

A hearin' him lay down the law about priests an' their power over men;

An' I has a few thoughts o' my own, but I keeps my own thoughts to mysen;

An' often I wishes I were at the Meetin', a gettin' o' good

To my soul; but I dursn't come nigh it, I dursn't, tho much as I would;

I feels taken down, Sir, a peg, an' like a man somehow disgraced,

But I hopes as the Lord 'ill forgive me, a seein' He knows how I'm placed.

II.

LEFT THE CHURCH AND JOINED THE MEETING.*

I.

'Trs fifty-two years ago, Janet, since I was wedded to thee, And living and loving together, you've been a good wife to me, And done by your sister's children as if they had been your own:

Ay me! but how fast the time has sped, and the years have flown!

II.

I can see you in fancy, my love, as you were on your wedding day,

Your ringlets gleamed like gold, and now they are silvergray;

Your cheeks, now so pale, outmatched the peach's bloom in hue:

And your eyes grown dim, beamed bright as the heaven's unclouded blue.

III.

But your heart has not changed, dear Janet, it beats still kind and warm;

And life has been happy to me, love, for you have been its charm.

And now this new-fledged priest, must come in his arrogant way,

And tell us we're living in sin, and I ought to put you away.

^{*} More than fifty years ago Mr. Hobson—now above eighty years of age—married his deceased wife's sister, who had the care of his children, and did so on the advice of the elergyman of the parish, who performed the ceremony. The marriage is a perfectly legal one, under Lord Lyndhurst's Act. Notwithstanding this, the present vicar of Coopersale, Epping, has refused to admit him to the communion, and has actually proposed that he should partition his house and live in separate rooms from his wife, who is seventy-seven years old, and in infirm health! Well might the outraged husband tell the Bishop that, if this line of conduct is pursued, the time will come "when the man most execrated in our parishes will be the clergyman of the Established Church."—The Liberator, March 1st, 1884.

IV.

The fool with his fad! I felt ready to laugh in his pompous face

As he opened the Prayer-Book page, and pointed me out the place

Among the forbidden degrees, as if that could make a thing sin,

Declared to be pure and good by the higher law within.

V.

That a sin? which gave dear Annie such joy before she died;

You call to mind that evening, how she drew us both to her side,

And she placed your hand in mine, and she said :—"When I am gone,

Don't bring a stranger here to be harsh to my children, John.

VI.

"Promise to marry Janet, for there's only she can take Their mother's place to the babes, and love them for my

sake;

She'll be all that I could have been, if I might have stayed awhile;"

And I promised, and round her lips played a glad and dying smile.

VII.

And on the night of the funeral, as we sat on each side of the fire,

The dear old rector and I, I told him of Annie's desire. He was then a young man in his prime, and we were fast friends and true;

And he said, as a wise man should, 'twas the best thing I could do.

VIII.

And when twelve months were gone, and the wound that loss had made

Felt the healing touch of Time, and our grief was somewhat stayed,

In the village church we knelt before him—man and wife—As he blessed the spoken vows that had made us one for life.

IX.

Ay! but how things are altered now the dear old rector's dead,

And this young upstart priestling has come to the place in his stead,

Upsetting the ways of the village with the borrowed tricks of Rome;

Invading the ties of marriage, and the sacred life of home.

X.

Janet, this fool with his folly has opened my eyes. All

I've stood up for the old State Church; but I see there's something wrong;

A man may sleep never so sound but he'll wake up when stung by a gnat,

And I've taken a pew at the Meeting—they may thank the priest for that.

III.

BILLY'S FLOGGIN'.*

TOLD BY A VILLAGE HOUSEWIFE.

I.

What do you think, Peggy Jenkins? They've been floggin' my Billy at school.

What's that you say? "Very like he desarved it, for Bill's but a fool."

Seein' as 'ow I'm his mother, I calls that a little too bad, Why, you may search the whole village and wont find a properer lad

^{*} On the :6th of March, 1884, Mr. Mundella, in the House of Commons, informed Mr. Broadhurst that the Vicar of Kidlington admitted that the teacher of the National school there had flogged, and for ten days deprived of their usual fifteen minutes' recreation, a number of scholars. These little ones were thus punished for going to a treat at a Methodist Free Church.

II.

I'll own he bean't one o' the sharpest, for all as he plods at his books,

Tisn't hallus the best is the sharp 'uns, an' that you may see by young Snooks,

Him as run off wi your apples, or Timmins's rampageous chap—

Sharp enough when last Sunday he squirted the puddlemuck over your cap.

Ш.

You never know'd Billy do sich-like, he wouldn't hurt even a fly,

An' I never miss'd owt from the pantry, or ketched him out tellin' a lie;

But it bean't on account of his lessins, or jinin' in mischeevious larks,

As that brute of a Master 'ave caned him, an' his back be all blue with the marks.

IV.

You see,' gin the folks at the Meetin' Schoolmaster were hallus dead-set,

An' hates 'em all wusser nor pison, but wheerfore I never larned yet,

I never know'd any harm on 'em, tho' mysen I don't lean to Dissent,

For I knows wot I owes to my betters. an' I hallus 'ave gone wheer they went.

V.

Well, when the new Pairson come hither an' started his rum goin's on,

Upsettin' the place an' revarsin' whatever old Pairson 'ad done,

Schoolmaster took up wi' 'un straight, an' said all were done for the best,

An' togither they laid theer two heads, as thick as two crows in a nest.

VI

It warn't very long ere, one mornin', the Pairson, he entered the school;

An' spoke to the childer, an' told 'em he'd come to lay down a new rule,

Which were as no schollards wot come to the school should, on any pertence,

Ever ventur' a foot in the Meetin, or spend wi' Dissenters theer pence.

VII.

An' sez he—"If you dar' disobey, by some 'un you're sure to be seen,

Besides, you'll be guilty of schism,"—whatever that theer thing may mean,—

"Your Master has orders to punish, the Squire 'll forbid you the feast,

An' wust of all I shall be anger'd, an' recollect I am your Priest."

VIII.

When the Meetin'ers heer'd o' new rule, they started to git up a row,

"'Twere agin the law o' the land, an' they wouldn't agree to 't no how."

But the Squire come down on 'em sharp, an' bade 'em submit wi' good grace,

Or he'd make it too hot for theer bearin', and harry them out o' the place.

IX.

Well! It didn't seem much to consarn our Bill, this new rule, you see,

For he hallus a trotted to Church on Sundays alongside o' me,

An'as for his pence, it hain't often the boy has a penny to spend,

So theer warn't any very great danger o' his breakin' rule that way, my friend.

Χ.

But here's 'ow it all come about as the boy had a floggin'.—
You mind

How the Meetin'ers got up a tea-fight, as best way o'raisin' the wind

To smarten theer place, and they sent for a gemman from big Lunnon town,

To give 'em wot they calls a lecter, an' his lantern affair to bring down;

XI.

An' show 'em some picters o' marters a burnin' in bonfires alight,

They sez as they did sich things wunst, though I hain't for believin' it quite:

'Ow 'appy our Pairson 'ad been an' he could but a lived in them days,

An' Schoolmaster too, an' a seen the Meetin'ers fizz i' the blaze.

XII.

Well! Barker, the deacon, meets Billy, an' arxes him come to theer tea.

An' sez he—"Theer's a couple o' tickets as 'll do for thy mother an' thee."

'Tisn't often you ketch Mister Barker a doin' a kindness like that.

For he keeps a tight grip on his money, an' knows pritty well wot he's at.

XIII.

So seein' the tickets were guv us, I thort I were doin' no ill In takin' the boy to the Meetin', just for wunst, to git a good fill.

An' lor, Peg! it did my heart good to see him tuck in at the cake,

It were right proper stuff, that it were, them as made it knew well how to bake.

XIV.

And arter the tea-fight were over they darkened the place, and they show'd

The picters theer on a big sheet, and the gemman he told wot he know'd

About them poor souls, which the bodies was roasted by priests for their good,

An' then, lass, I thort on our Pairson, and what he would do

XV.

An' Billy were full of it all, a clappin' his hands like the rest.

An' as we come 'ome'ards he told me he hardly know'd what he liked best,

The dollops o' cake as he'd swaller'd or bootiful picters he'd seen,

But sez he—"I's afeared that our Master 'Il somehow find out as I've been."

XVI

An' so it turned out; for next mornin' Schoolmaster he takes out his cane.

An' guv our poor Bill sich a thrashin' he hain't yet got over his pain,

An' all 'cos I took him to tea-fight, a seein' the tickets was given;

Eh, Peggy; I wonders wot notions they has o' sich doin's in Heaven.

IV.

BESSIE'S FUNERAL.*

RUSTIC FATHER'S STORY.

T.

Bless my buttons !-- if it bean't our Dicky come back 'ome across the big sea;

As I spied thee come roun' by the 'illside, theer were summit as tell'd me 'twere thee;

But, eh!-what a man thou be grow'd, an' thy face be all bronze wi' the sun.

I's warrant thou's hoshuns to tell us o' all thou ha' seen and ha' done.

What's that? Thou's been makin' o' money, an' thou's goin' to buy thee a farm?

Thou's good for eight thousan' an' more? Who'd a dreamt o' thee gettin' so warm?

An' thou'lt 'ave a few 'underds to spare, for a cottage for

mother an' me?

"The rollin' stone gathers no moss," they ha' said, but that bean't true o' thee.

III.

Eh! But mother 'll be gladden'd to see thee, tho' thou's come on a sorrowful day,

Thou never ha' know'd little Bessie, she were born arter thou went away;

She's gone, lad! 'Twere only on Thoorsday, the Loord call'd her 'ome to His fold,

An' this very noon i' the churchyard we left our lamb under the mould.

An' thy mother's been sobbin' an' frettin' e'er sin' the last breath o' the child,

She knows it's the Loord's will, but natur' 's loath hallus to be reconcil'd.

^{* &}quot; A child of thirteen met with her death by falling down a well at Maidenhead. The friends of the child, who are Noncontormists, taking advantage of the Burials Act, desired her to be buried by a Baptist minister. A short service having been gone through at the home, the funeral proceeded towards the churchyard, where a panel of the fence was removed to allow of the approach to the grave, as it was not permitted to enter by the church gates."-Christian World, April 3rd, 1884.

An' Bess were our youngest, last bunch, like, o' blossom as show'd on the vine,

An' theer doin's to-day ha' heap'd fuel on thy poor mother's sorrow an' mine.

V.

Thou mun know, lad, as sin' thou left country, they've been changin' the law o' the lan',

An' now when us Meetin'ers buries, at the grave we may 'ave our own Man.*

Theer's none dar' forbid him the churchyard, or muzzle his mouth when he prays,

'Twere wot old Pairson, when he 'ad livin', said he 'oped he might see i' his days.

VI

He were a good man, an' we never harf know'd his worth till he were dead;

We larn'd it at last o' new Pairson, wi' his pride an' his silly pig-head.

As vain as a bantam, as stiff as a mule, an' as blind as a bat, You never can tell any mornin' wi' his whimzies wot next he'll be at.

VII.

Now our Bessie, she never were crissen'd, for Our Man we've at Meetin' jus' now †

Doesn't hold wi' the sprinklin' o' babies; for mysen I'm in doubt; anyhow,

I thort as it didn't much matter, for the Loord wouldn't love her no less,

Nor his angels, for want o' the sprinklin', shut the door on our sweet little Bess.

VIII.

Well, I minded their law, an' left notice wi' Pairson, just as I were bound.

To say we should bury our Bessie, 'an wot time we should be up at ground,

An' this forenoon Our Man from the Meetin' come to 'ouse, and then, arter he'd prayed,

They screw'd down the coffin, an' started to churchyard wi' dear little maid.

^{* &}quot;Our Man" is the title employed by the rustics in many country places when speaking of their minister.

[†] The reader is to suppose that this was one of the "Union Churches," composed alike of Baptists and Pædobaptists.

IX.

But, oh lad! we foun' the gates fasten'd upon us, an' sexton were theer.

An' sez, "You mayn't bring her in this way, the grave as
I've dug haint nigh here,

But at back end o' ground, an' I've taken a couple o' stakes from the fence,

You mun squeeze yourselves in, for I'm order'd by Pairson to keep you from hence."

X.

Then the beerers they murmurs wi' anger, an' began at the Pairson to rail,

An'thy mother an' rest o' the wimen they set up a sobbin an' wail,

An' Our Man said the thing were unlawful, an' he'd write to the papers next day,

Howsomedever, we crept round the hedgerow, an' took body in by back way.

XI.

An' now as we stood by the graveside, and Our Man did his readin' begin,

They flung up the winders o' school-house, an' the schollards they set up a din

Wi' theer singin'; I's sure it were done to drown Our Man's voice; anyhow,

Master Priest come an' stood at the doorstep, and looked out wi' a scowl on his brow.‡

XII.

An' that's 'ow we buried our Bessie, but it's grievious to think by my word!

Wot notions the likes o' this Pairson ha' gotten o' sarvin' the Loord,

By malice an' spite agin folks as don't hap to theer creed to belong,

Not as 'ow it could hurt little Bessie, safe up theer from all 1884. insult an' wrong.

[‡] Incredible as it may seem that priestly pride and prejudice should lead to such an outrage upon all right feeling and decency I can vouch for the actual occurrence of the circumstance here introduced. It occurred when I was settled in Northamptonshire, in the village next to my own, at the burial of the child of Baptist parents. My friend, the Rev. M. C. Dixon, was at the time the Congregational minister of the place, and had consented to conduct a funeral service outside the boundry wall of the churchyard, and it was while engaged in his solemn task that he was subjected to the annoyance described.

Epigrams.*

I.

FUGITIVUS.

(DEDICATED TO THE EARL OF DERBY.)

"Freedom's battle once begun Bequeathed by Derby, sire to son."

All heart, impassioned, ardent, for the slave A Stanley once could plead; but in his grave He lies: All policy, his cooler son Robs the poor slave, escaped, of freedom won.

II.

REVERENDUS.

(DEDICATED TO THE VICAR OF OWSTON FERRY.)

And so reverend sir, at last 'tis decided.

The reverend title your pride 'tis to wear,
The law of good manners has strictly provided,
Your reverend selves with schismatics must share;
But fear not 'twill make any palpable difference,
Or that folk, in the main, will revere you the less;
For, from what I have noticed, I'm free to confess,
The people for parsons have not had much reverence.

III.

MUSA FUNEREA.

Open the gates and let them enter!
They're bringing the corpse of a horrid Dissenter,
Child of Schism (half-sister to Riot);
In his grave, at least, the man will be quiet.
But never a prayer,—not a word,—not a sound!
Like a dead dog, put him into the ground;
Or, if there must be any prayer at all,
Let it be outside, over the wall.
Down with the Chapel, and up with the Church,
And may the State never leave the last in the lurch.

^{*} These Epigrams were contributed by the Author in the years 1875 and 1876 to the columns of the Northampton Mercury. Two or three possessed of a purely local interest are here omitted.

IV. BENONI

DEDICATED TO THE RIGHT HON. B. DISRAELI, M.P.

BEN's clever resources the world must admire, Who, by blundering friends dragged into the mire, Extricates the whole lot, the cunning tactician! By means (happy thought!) of a Royal Commission.

V. FILIUS JACOBI.

(I THINK, the rather, That *Isaac* was his father: If so, the tricksy elf Is Jacob's self.)

'Tis well for the Tories, when snared by Old Nick,
Some perilous blunder they've made;
They've one for a leader, who knows well the trick,
The consequence how to evade;
A scion of Jacob's ingenuous stock,
And keen at contriving a ruse,
As that wily Hebrew, when, tending the flock,
He tampered with Laban's fat ewes.

VI. ECCLESIÆ CHARITAS.

Or course, Dissenters must be buried somewhere, But in the parish churchyards—should they come there! By silent burial mark the great disparity
'Twixt them and all true Churchmen—this is charity.

VII. FELES INFELICES.

DEDICATED TO THE HIGH CHURCH SACRAMENTARIANS AND THE LOW CHURCH EVANGELICALS.

A BIT of stale bread, all mouldy with age;
And two fierce cats shut up in a cage,
Over the morsel, see how they rage.
Undo the wires, and let them go free;
For until you do that, it's quite obvious to me,
The quarrelsome creatures will never agree.

VIII.

SYLLABUS CONSERVATORUM.

DEDICATED TO THE CONSTITUENCIES

Deny Dissenters all concession,

Let rancour dog them to the grave!

Bind fast the fetters of oppression,

Nor offer succour to the slave!

Give to the Queen a bran new title!

In water sink four million pounds!

John Bull, how like you this recital

Of Dizzy's programme?—(Answer:) ZOUNDS!

IX.

SACERDOS ACERBUS.

DEDICATED TO ANGLICANUS ARROGANS.

("At a meeting of High Churchmen, for discussion of the Burials Bill, the Rev. T. Hugo is reported in the *Church Times* to have spoken of '*The carrion of Dissent*.' He also said: 'Dissenters were chiefly remarkable for impudence, ignorance, and stupidity; and Dissent was below contempt as regarded its *Intellectual position*.")

Your own intellectual position, proud priest!

Amongst Billingsgate offal you'll find.

Dead Dissenters are carrion, you say; you, at least,
While you live, have a carrion mind.

X.

NON IMPERATRIX.

Messalina and Catherine were empresses both (Of whose deeds we forbear the recital), So admired by Dizzy, that he, nothing loth, To Victoria would give the same title. He fears lest his Sovereign, to folk Oriental, Should seem nothing more than a "Rana"; Why not, then, from the East, get his name ornamental, And dub her, at once, a Sultana? Grand Sultana of India—this surely will answer To the gorgeous ideas of our statesman-romancer.

XI.

FROM BEN BOWSPRIT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. W—D H—T.

Go back to your fields and your dogs, Sir!
Go back to your horses and hunting!

For what has a land-lubber squire to do,
To handle ship's tackle and bunting?

You steer the old vessel? You'll run her aground;
On the rocks you've trvice bumped her already;
So give up the tiller to some one that knows
How to tack and to keep her course steady!

THE PERSECUTED HOUSEMAID.

HER LETTER TO MISS HIGGINSON DONE INTO VERSE, THE ORIGINAL ORTHOGRAPHY BEING RETAINED.

My dear Jimmimy Igginson,
Hi takes my pen in 'and for ritin',
Yer knos as littery composin'
Air hallus what hi takes delite in;
Hi wants to tell yer all as 'ow
Is on me put by Missis Jervis,
Yer've no hidear the pussycootions
Of hunpertected gals in service.

Halltho' in Birchem's hevenin' skool
Hi 'ad a fust rate heddikashun
They 'ere takes no haccount o' that,
But makes me feel my digridashun;
Hi takes up some romaunty page,
Wen, jest as hinterest's beginnin',
'They rings the bell, an' hi must go
An' fetch down stares the dirty linen.

Hi've got a lovier lad as cums
An' at the hairy gratin' kisses
'Is 'and to me; a smart young chap;
But that air unbeknown to missis;
For ho, she hutter'd crewel words
That mornin' wen she fust hingaged me,
"We don't hallow no follerers 'ere"—
My goodness, 'ow that speech hinraged me.

Hi'd like to harx 'im hin to sup,
Hif jest to be perlite a littel;
But lor, the marm is sich a screw,
She'd sartin shure an' miss the wittel.
Hi guv a gipsey harf a loaf,
As told my fortin' hin the lobbie,
The missis cum an' found us there,
An' sent young 'Arry for the "bobbie."

Whene'er hi 'as my hollerdaze,
An' charnce to stop hout till the mornin,'
She cums down stares in dizzybill,
An' bids me take a month's fair warnin';
She stays 'erself till four an' five,
Wen she goes hout to balls an' partis,
But hi must bundle hin by ten,
An' well nigh bruken my poor hart is.

Then wen they dines off ducks or fowls,
Good Lord! it gives me quite the heavin's;
They takes the bes parts for theirselves,
An' hi'm serposed to heat the leavin's;
They washes theirn too down with wine,
Sometimes it's clarrit, sometimes sherry,
Wile hi've a single glarse o' bier,
An' hall alone to make me merry.

There's hern an' Marster's bedroom fine,
Hall 'ung with picters hemblemattic,
Hi 'as to stretch my wary limbs
Upon a truckle hin the hattic;
An' Marster 'Arry's sich a himp,
An' hup to all sorts o' pertences,
He makes 'isself a happerishun,
To drive away my frittened senses.

Hi thinks as hi shall hemmergrate,
An' try my fortin' in Horstrallee;
Hi'm sick o' people's whimzies 'ere,
Hi'd jest as leave be 'ung at Bailee;
They sez as hout there in Wan Demon,
They calls us 'elps an' gives good wages,
An' heyery missis, wen she 'ires,
To wait upon 'er maid hingages.

WASTED WIT.

I MADE an awful funny joke, Original, of course, It took me nearly half the day To give it point and force.

And as I turned it round and round,
It seemed to me so rich,
I felt my waistcoat buttons give,
I laughed to such a pitch.

I told it to my darling Jane, See didn't seem to catch; It set her dander up; she then And there broke off the match.

I tried it on the office boy,
That little imp of sin;
He gave a puzzled stare, nor made
The least attempt to grin.

I cracked it with my hairdresser; He said, "It gave him pain, He felt I had insulted him," And begged me to explain.

I told it to my Maiden Aunt, Her frown, I see it still; She said, "It was unpardonable," And struck me from her will.

I told it o'er a bowl of punch, To Jones, my bosom friend, It riled the fellow so, it brought Our friendship to an end.

I tried it on my landlady, Good Heavens! Don't speak of shrews! She bridled up, and loaded me With virulent abuse.

That fatal joke I thought so good,
Turned out *no joke* to me,
And much I fear what might ensue
Were I to tell it thee.

A BACHELOR'S WANTS.

"There is nothing like knowing what you want, and seeing that you get it. The advertiser who inserts the following sample of his moderate desires in a country newspaper seems a very clear sighted, intelligent man, and might make a good Prime Minister:—

'Wanted, Lodgings, by a B.A. Advertiser wishes it clearly understood that none need apply who object on principle to fall in with his not excessive requirements, which include—(1) punctuality in serving meals; (2) moderate quiet in the house: (3) dry toast thrice daily; (4) joints to be roasted (not baked), and chops and steaks to be grilled (not fried); (5) the free use of a latch key; and (6) the absence of a cat.'"—Daily News, Nov. 7th, 1887.

Wanted, apartments to suit a B.A.,
But whether of Cambridge or Oxford's not known,
He's very particular, so I've heard say,
Like most single gentlemen, living alone.

He's a bachelor *certain*, of *Arts*, perhaps of *Hearts*; Blooming Ass, one suggests, but no, that cannot be; His advertisement shows him a man of some parts, He may be a *don*, but he's not a *don*-key.

He fully declares what his wishes include,

They're set forth in order, yclept, apple-pie,
By applican's plainly to be understood,
So that no one need answer who cannot comply.

In regard to his time, he's a man very nice;
Each *instant's* of *moment* and cannot be wasted,
So his meals to the tick of the clock, quite precise,
Must be served, or be left on the table untasted.

In the house must be heard no buzzing and noise, And outside no beating of carpets or mats. He can't endure romping of girls and of boys, Or rattling of dishes, or squalling of brats.

He has a great liking, he tells us, for toast—
He wants it thrice daily, not buttered, but dry;
His meat mustn't be baked, it must always be roast;
His chops must be grilled, he abominates fry.

Of the door-latch he claims the free use of the key,
To let himself in without notice or warning,
I suppose that he sometimes gets out on the spree,
And doesn't come home till the break of the morning.

Above all, that nuisance, the lodging-house cat, So renowned, must be absent wherever he dwells, For you never can tell what poor pussy is at, With the beer and the baccy and everything else.

Such, in short, are the wishes of this worthy man;
Whereupon our own landlady says:—"Best advise
The young fellow to migrate as fast as he can,
Such lodgings he'll find out, p'rhaps, in Paradise."
1887.

IMITATIONS OF THE STYLE OF THOMAS HOOD.

I.

LUKE LATHER.

Luke Lather was a barber, sirs,
And lived at Islington;
He used to soap his customers,
And laid it thickly on.

And yet he was no flatterer,
For often he would carp
At what they said, and being blunt,
He took them up quite sharp.

'Twas very strange a man so *pert*, Could so *expertly* shave, But, though no one could better *scrape*, He never learnt to *save*.

His circumstances were so strait,
All things with him went wry!
His funds were low, no doubt because
He held his head so high.

For it was found by all who crossed The threshold of his door, The more he took their beards away He bearded them the more. And so his customers fell off,
Because his tongue ran on,
And, as no one came in his shop,
He found his income gone.

He tried to borrow, but his friends, Had so unfriendly grown, They left him to himself, alas! He could not get a loan.

He thought, "How cold this cruel world!"
On the wide world adrift;
And went and pawned his *shirt*, for he
Was put to such a *shift*.

He pensive grew through lack of pence, And melancholy eyed; And getting quite beside himself, Committed suicide.

And so he passed a childless man, The victim of despair, For though he *hair* had often *dyed*, He *died* without an *heir*.

And having nothing else to spend,
He spent his latest breath;
And all who once had known him said
It was a barbarous death.

1864.

II.

GILES GUZZLE.

GILES GUZZLE was a thirsty soul,
To drinking such a slave,
His goings on, among the gay,
Soon brought him to the grave.

For 'twas his habit to get out
To publics, every night,
With boon companions on the loose,
Returning always tight.

His wife, good soul, though much distressed, Yet never proved unkind, But tucked him in, between two sheets, Full three sheets in the wind. He swigged no end of Burton Ale, Of Bass's pale no less, And in his love for double X, He went to great excess.

He swallowed so much Dublin stout, That he grew pale and thin; Drank rum until it made him queer, And found a snare in gin.

Gout came and took him in the feet,
Delirium in the head,
And dropsy through the drops he took,
Confined him to his bed.

The doctor came and felt his pulse,
And said the *merry* cup
Had brought him *down* to this *sad* state,
So he must give him *up*.

He died, and as they knew, in life, The thing he loved so dear, They bore him to his sepulchre, Stretched out upon his *bier*.

1865.

III.

BILL STRADDLE.

BILL STRADDLE was a jockey man, And rode the winning horse; And every body said how *fine* He ran it on the *course*.

For, having rubbed about in life, He was a sharp young blade; And used to bet; he might, indeed, Have had a better trade.

Yet many a poet such a lot
As Bill's would not refuse;
For all his lifetime, he had been
The darling of the *Mews*.

And though he could not read or write, Yet 'tis a truth unfeigned, However bad his bringing up, All said he was well-trained. Alas! that I should have to tell Some shocking things of Bill, Who, having much to do with corn, Got mixed up in a mill.

There was a bruiser-boy he knew, His name was Jemmy Rose Alas, for him who knows the force Of Jem's fives on his nose!

For they agreed, upon the square, That they would have a round; The stakes they laid, a pound a head Each other's heads to pound.

And though the better of the two, Yet Bill came off the worse; For thrown by Jemmy heels o'er head, He suffered a reverse.

All bleeding by his friends led out,
He to an inn was borne,
And there they drew him wine because
His claret had been drawn.

Within the inn he staid that night, Next morning rose at four, And boned ten shillings from the till, But left behind a score;

And so made off; when, in his haste, His luckless feet did trip, And slipping down a river bank, He gave them all the slip.

The drags drew up his drowned corse And showed his course was o'er, And dying last of all his race, He ran a race no more.

MORAL.

The moral of my tale is this:—
Don't ever mix in mills;
Nor learn the ways of sporting men;
Nor rob your neighbour's tills.

IV.

DINING OUT.

The day was fine, so out to dine,
I went with Harry Brown,
To see a distant relative,
Not very far from town.

At *Dul*wich was my cousin's home, A *lively* man was he, And though he ne'er had learned to *sing*, Was always in his *glee*.

We rode there in a hansom cab,
Of ugly shape and hue,
We knew of course the thing was old,
Or all as good as knew.

My cousin met us at the door And gave us welcome warm; No ceremonious dunce was he, And never stood on form.

Then as the *carriage* drove away,

He asked us of our *weal*,

Poured out some wine, and bade the maid,

Dish up the ham and *veal*.

She served up dinner to a T,
Precisely too at one,
All had been done so well below,
That nought was underdone.

My relative and I to slice
The joints between us halved,
It was my task to carve the veal,
Although it had been calved.

Nor, after dinner, was there lack
Of good things to divert;
My cousin knew our merits, so
He gave us our dessert.

In chat we sat *before the fire*,

And being in the vein,
Our host did *roast*, and *merry* made
Ourselves with his *champagne*.

He made us stay with him and sup, Excuse he laughed to scorn, Our *mirth* so late we kept it up, That we were nigh to *morn*.

In short we spent a pleasant time,
And not much given to roam,
"Twas something in another's house,
To be made quite at home.

1865.

WILLIAM SLOW, THE CABMAN'S THOUGHTS ON BICYCLES AND TRICYCLES.

I THORT as ow ven railvays started,
An' coves vos borne along by steam,
Instead of bein' gently carted
By country vaggons an' a team;
Ven the ole stageys ran no longer,
An' coachees to the vurkus vent,
Ve should a' done vi' new inwentions,
An' folks at last 'ud rest content.

But, Lord! I finds I vos mistaken,—
Vich means yer know I vos a muff—
The risk o' bein' smashed to hattoms
Vos not excitin' near enuff,
Vi legs that toil like any jailbird's
To see 'em ow my busum bleeds,
A devil's pace to meet the devil,
They rides their new wheel hossipedes.

I feels my 'art vith vonder flutters,
 I 'ardly knows vot 'tis I 'spects,
But there's a woice vich in me mutters,
 Vell, Villiam Slow, vot next, and next?
Ven they've grown tired o' them queer hosses,
 An' trains is found too slow by harf,
Afoor yer dies, ole bloak, yer'll see 'em
 A' travellin' by the tellygrarf.

1864.

THE TRIALS OF MATRIMONY.

OH! when I was a bachelor, I thought a single life, For man below, a state of woe, And wished I had a wife; 'Tis very true, my cares were few, My spirits gay and supple; But then, I had to stand the chaff Of every married couple.

Besides, the place was not a home,
In which I used to lodge;
My landlady a harpy proved,
And up to every dodge;
She drank my wine, she sliced my meat,
She boned my bread and butter,
And looked indignant virtue, when
I dared my wrongs to utter.

When others took their "walks abroad,"
I met them arm in arm,
Gay partners chatting side by side,
And felt the potent charm;
I fancied husbands looked content,
I saw that wives were pretty,
And deemed such folk, where'er I went,
Regarded me with pity.

So I resolved to change my state,
And early to get wed,
To make a home, and take a mate
To share my board and bed;
As sick of "single blessedness,"
I ventured on the double,
And found, when spliced, I'd got enticed
Into a mesh of trouble.

My wife is very delicate,
And always taking pills
And draughts, for which the doctor sends
Unconscionable bills.
She has a taste for looking smart,
(Else what were women made for?)
Wears bonnets, flounces, feathers, frills,
Of course they must be paid for.

The milliner comes frequently,
The mantua-maker too,
But tho' my purse gets worse and worse,
'Tis no use looking blue!

Like life my income's limited, And that you know s "a vapour," I find that matrimony means The money for the draper.

"What can't be cured must be endured,"
The proverb's somewhat stale,
But oh! her tongue! like Hamlet's Ghost,
I could unfold a tale;—
I may not joke, and if I smoke,
Each time she makes me rue it;
I used to ask male friends to sup,
But long have ceased to do it.

Besides these joys, I have four boys
Who scuttle out their shoes,
Three darling girls with hair that curls,
And skirts that are profuse,
A little babe who squalls all night
And will not let me rest;
Behold, ye lonely bachelors,
How married men are blest!

1865.

THE GIFTS OF THE GODS.

The other day, on high Olympus, The gods assembled to discuss What favours they should show to mortals, And gave their votes unanimous;

To send as soon as most convenient
A trusty servant of Apollo's,
Bearing their gifts to certain people,
With their best compliments, as follows:—

To H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, That stalwart warrior, tough as leather, Guess, what?—A rapier?—No! a gamp, For battling with the rainy weather:

To Gladstone, a resistless axe,
By Vulcan forged for noble uses,
To fell the poison-spreading trees
Of wrongs, corruptions and abuses:

To brutal Balfour, man of blood, So given with Truth and Right to palter, Indifferent to a nation's wail, That most appropriate gift, a halter:

To Bright, the People's Tribune, once, But in his old age turning Tory, A lock of Cobden's hair, to be A souvenir of former glory:

To Bookstall Smith, a word of counsel*
In trade to be a fair dispenser
Of newspapers and books, since he
Was never of the Press made Censor.

Some patent truncheons to Charles Warren,
All warranted to come down floppers,
To be employed among themselves,
On their own sconces, by his "coppers:"

To Traitor Joe, about to start
To Yankee-land a box of ointment,
To salve his soul, stung by the smart
Of treachery's well-earned disappointment:

Relics of Kemble, Kean, Macready, To Irving in stage-passion warmin'; And to each beauty of the Ballet, A decent dress to wrap her form in:

To Baron Tennyson, a heap
Of classics for his delectation,
To serve him for self-measurement,
And let him know his proper station;

A coil of rope to A. C. Swinburne,
For they had heard he was a sad'un:
A dozen novels, ready made,
And full of horrors, to Miss Braddon:

Some common sense to Johnny Ruskin:
A style to Sala less conceited:
And unto me, my unpaid bills,
A god-send truly, all receipted.

1887.

^{*}These verses appeared in Fun and Gossip, a Portsmouth Paper which was boycotted by Messrs. Smith and Sons, on account of its advanced Radicalism.

AN OLD FABLE IN A NEW DRESS.

An impertinent donkey set up a loud bray,
As a spirited war-horse came prancing that way;
The steed, when the insult he heard,
Looked around to discover what creature it was
Presumed to affront him, and, seeing the ass,
Trotted on without saying a word.

MORAL.

With silent contempt, you will find, as a rule, Is the best way to answer the jibes of a fool. Rothwell, 1878

WHAT NEXT?

WHEN Neckar, the chief minister,
Ere Louis came to grief,
Resigned his post, the luckless king
Then lost his Neckar chief;
Ah! might he still in the bureau
He kept him, some have said,
They ne'er had severed from his neck
His most unlucky head.

1864.

AN "ARAB" LAY.

A LA TENNYSON. WITH APOLOGIES TO HIS BABBLING BROOK.

I come from haunts of troll and tramp, I make a sudden sally,
I twigs my swell, and prigs his gamp,
Then scutter down an alley;
By sloshy slums I hurry down,
Or slip between the shutters;
I knows each turnin' in the town,
And prowl among the gutters:
Till in at Aaron's door I dart,
And shows my swag and plunder,
And gets a "bob," becos I part
For ne'er a penny under.

I sneaks vare chaps hangs up their togs,
In passages and lobbies,
Then skulk behind a pile of logs,
And grin and dodge the bobbies.
I sees the things by shop-doors set,
I twigs the 'appy minute,
I dive, I duck, I grab, I get,
And fly off like a linnet;
And ere the hue and cry, I dart
To Aaron's with my plunder;
Another "bob!" becos I part
For ne'er a penny under.

I vinds about, and in and out
Among the kiddies playing,
And as they fling their toys about,
I vatch vare they're a-laying;
Then pounce upon them, bat and ball,
Vil'st they are at their prattle,
Snatch up a cap, a coat, a shawl,
And p'raps a kinchin's rattle;
And off to Aaron's crib I dart,
And turns out all my plunder,
And gets a "bob," becos I part
For ne'er a penny under.

1887.

MR. CHARLEY, M.P.

THERE'S a boy they call Charley, a Lancashire chap,
Who's been bragging his pluck and dreaming of glory,
With a thorough contempt for all kinds of "clap-trap,"
For like his friend Dizzy, you know he's a Tory,
And he's made it the work of his life to demolish
Billy Gladstone, for all his fine speeches and polish.

But if Charley and Billy should come to a fight,
Master Charley may find himself out in his guess,
For a rare fist for knocking a cove down outright,
Billy always has been, as he's "free to confess;"
And besides for a thing that they call a "pediculus"
To vanquish a lion, the thought's quite ridiculous.
1868.

AN IRISH CHURCH-BILL SQUIB.

What tho' Whalley, that hater Of Rome, has turned traitor.

And gone with the "Aves" to support this vile Bill,

We've a champion in Charley

Who never will parley

But fight to the death with that church-robber WILL;

He may carry his hobby,

With cheers through the lobby,

For which Grigg "has sent him"—he says,—"to the

But he can't stop our ranting And boasting and canting.

Or stifle the loud "bray of Exeter Hall."

1868.

DISRAELI'S VIEW OF A STATE-CHURCH.

Of the State-Church that cute and most subtle observer, Disraeli, has made the discovery prodigious, That its use is to ward off the dangers of fervour, And keep us from all growing over-religious.

Since her champion, the Church's own special selection,
Asserts such a thing, 'twere presumption to doubt it;
And hence we "Non-Cons," of this State-Church
connection.

Are more firmly convinced we were better without it. 1869,

MR. GOSCHEN'S BUDGET AND FREE EDUCATION SCHEME.

It appears that in view of an Autumn dissolving,
To give them a cry to go down with the Nation,
Our Salisbury rulers at length are resolving
To bring in a measure of Free Education.

Ah! Who could have ever indulged in the notion, That the statesman, by whom would this scheme be propounded.

Should turn out to be Mr. Chancellor Goschen? No wonder the Standard's whole staff are dumbfounded!

While the Liberals have reason its motive to question, While the traders in liquor most wofully grudge it, While the Tories must find it full hard of digestion, To the people it comes as a boon of a Budget. April, 1891.

THE RUSTIC'S PRAVER.

A COUNTRY bumpkin in the North, One night in prayer was holding forth With fervour at the Village Meeting, The villagers each sentence greeting With many a loud ejaculation In thorough Methodistic fashion.

"Aw Loord," he said, "thoo knaws as hoo We sinners maäke naw mooch ado, To thaänk tha' for thoi boondless loov In all thoo sen's us from aboov: If any sense o' good moight reach us The little chickens well moight teach us." Thereat the people gave a groan Inspiring him to louder tone.

"Aw Loord, the very cocks an' 'ens Than sinful creaturs 'as moor sense. Eäch dhrop tha' drinks theer 'eads tha' raaise, Thoi 'and as gives it 'em to praäise." Then clutching at the happy thought, His prayer, he to a climax brought,— "Aw Loord maäke us all cocks an' 'ens!" The place resounded with "Aämens."

Esther, the Queen.

A DRAMA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AHASUERUS, King of Persia.

Memucan, an Aged Prince and Counsellor.

Mordecai, a Jew, Uncle to Esther.

Haman, the King's Favourite.

Harbonah, Hegai, Hatach, Bigthan, Teresh,
Chamberlains of the Court.

Esdras, a Jewish Priest.

Esther, Niece to Mordecai.

Zarah, Abigail, Waiting Maids to Esther.

Zeresh, Wife to Haman.

Princes, Eunuchs, Scribes, Dancers, Attendants
and other Supernumeraries.

Scene—The Royal City of Shushan.

Time—The Reign of King Ahasuerus.

ACT THE FIRST.

Scene I.—The Curtain rises on the Grand Court of the Garden of the Royal Palace of Shushan, a view of which with trees and fountains is shown at the background of the Stage. Ahasuerus and his Seven Princes discovered lolling on luxurious couches, overhung with gorgeous canopies of curtain. The couches are all raised above the level of the Stage, that of Ahasuerus, being elevated above the rest. Other Nobles dispersed about. The Chamberlains, seven in number and other servants, wait in attendance. Troop of Dancing Girls lightly and ornamentally attired, execute the figure of an intricate and graceful dance to the Music of the Orchestra. At the close of the dance the dancers divide and stand at the sides to right and left.

AHAS-

PRINCES and nobles of our Persian realm How well these lovely forms so skilled to thread The mazy windings of the dance beseem This banqueting of ours: but that our feast
Lack not its crowning charm, the Queen herself
Shall grace it this last day; that paragon
Of perfect loveliness shall glad your eyes.
So shall ye, to your several provinces,
Bear back a memory of this joyful season,
Never to quit you. Let a chamberlain
To the chief eunuch of our harem bear
Our message for Queen Vashti, that she come,
With all convenient speed, before the king,
Wearing her golden crown and royal attire,
That these may see her beauty.

Exit* Harbonah.
Turning to the Dancers.**
Meanwhile, ye
Renew the dance!

The Dance is renewed. Re-enter HARBONAH.

HARBON-

Queen Vashti to her lord,

Sends royal greeting, but she deems his wish Born of a brain distempered by the fumes Of wine; whereof, when cooler reason governs, He will repent; and that she best consults His honor and her own true dignity, Abiding 'mong her maidens.

AHAS---

By the gods!

We brook not this. What! set her rebel will 'Gainst ours, and that in face of our whole court.

Too much hath she been humoured, and her pride A swollen river hath o'erpast its bounds;

But know how dear so e'er she hath been, we avenge This wanton insult to our majesty,

Ho! Let the revels end, the throng disperse;

No feasting after this! Remain alone

Our trusty council to confer with us,

And let the chamberlains be nigh at hand,

To attend upon our summons.

Execut all but the Seven Princes.

So my lords,

This freak the Queen hath wrought, in open scorn Of our royal mandate, must not pass unnoticed, Nor yet unpunished. Still remembering All she hath been to us, and the place she hath held

Within our heart, we would not have her die. Say, ye are skilled in law, what shall be done To Vashti, for this slight she hath put upon us?

MEMU.-Sire, not of your high majesty alone Hath wrong been suffered; that were rank offence, And of the law held capital; but all Your princes, and throughout your whole wide realm Men share with you dishonour. For this deed Shall everywhere be noised abroad and reach The universal ear of womankind. So shall they swell with pride and show contempt Disdainful of their husbands, 'gainst the yoke Of due subjection, which in all your lands Our custom hath imposed on them, rebelling. Each Persian household shall be filled with strife, Through wives revolted and their angered lords. Now, if it please the king, let him decree, And let it be among our changeless laws Inscribed, and published for an ordinance Throughout the king's dominions, that henceforth Queen Vashti come no more before the king, Her crown and queenship forfeit, her estate Transferred to some more duteous wife, her name Held in disgrace. So shall it come abroad, In all this glorious empire, that wives yield

AHAS-

In sooth, Memucan, thou hast counselled well, We e'er have held thy wisdom in esteem, Now most of all. Here take our signet ring, Go bid the secretaries of the court, With all dispatch, give to thy word effect, And write, where'er our governance is known, To every satrap, under royal seal, They shall make known, as our high sovran will, That we for disobedience have deposed Queen Vashti! and that for the common weal Of all our subject families we ordain "That every man bear rule in his own house."

Submission due and man rule, as is fit.

Scene II.—The Courtyard of the House of Mordecal.
Mordecal, solus:

'Tis by the king's commandment, so he said, Our lives the forfeit should we disobey. This is our bitter lot. In exile cast 'Mong those who hold our customs and our laws In Gentile scorn. Our God has cast us off, Not for our own but for our fathers' sins. And while his anger burns, we must endure The heavy load of these calamities. Our lives!—Ah were it but mine own, methinks, My soul were strong within me to outbrave This most unholy edict, to the Jew So loathly and abhorrent. But not mine Alone the peril; and I may not risk One lock of Esther's tresses. Nay, my more Than child, my heart's dear nestling turtle-dove, I vowed I would protect her orphanage From harm, whate'er befel; and to this hour, The God of Abraham helping me, I have kept My sacred charge. The king's commandment! ay! 'Tis that forbids resistance. Oh, that kings Should be! That men, poor doting worms should yield Such power to brother earth-worms and prostrate Heart, mind and soul before a fellow-man. Regarding him as scarcely less than God. Much cause have Jews to love the name of king! Since but for ours, these dread adversities Had ne'er o'erta'en our nation. Soft! She comes. (Enter Esther.)

Esth.—
What ails mine uncle?

Mord.—

Ails me, darling, why?

Esth.

I have seen thee pacing to and fro, this hour And more, with clouded brow and downcast look, As though some grief did agitate thy breast.

MORD .-

Prepare, my child, with fortitude to learn That which I loathe to tell. Thy fatal gift Of beauty hath undone us, and this day Parts Esther from her uncle. Езтн.—

Say not so!

No, no, I will not leave thee.

MORD .-

Child! the power

That hath determined this, no will of ours May venture to gainsay. The late decree Pronounced against the queen thou know'st. Know then As well, another follows at its heels. The eunuch Hegai hath it in his charge, Of all the virgins in the king's dominions, Three hundred of the loveliest to choose out And bring them to the palace; that from these One may be found, whose beauty and whose charms Shall so the king enamour, that on her His favour shall devolve, to her be given The forfeit crown of Vashti; her's to fill Henceforth the place of the discarded queen. Of these, the eunuch tells me, thou art one: Enjoins me to surrender thee, and adds Menace of death, should we dare disobey.

ESTH.-

Oh this is very sudden, very strange! My soul within me staggers at the thought, And I do feel my very brain spin round.

MORD.-

I doubt it not. Poor child I pity thee,
Nor pity less myself. So tenderly
Have I watched o'er thee, so delightedly
Beheld thy growth, thy beauty's budding charms,
Thy mind's expanding thought, and ever shrank
From entertainment of the change, I knew
That time must bring, when I should part with thee
To one of our own race, thine equal born.
And now to see thee from this heart and home,
Whereof thou hast been the joy, snatched and transplanted
Among the minions of the court, mid manners
And customs alien to thy bringing up,
And mixing with abhorrent Gentile blood,
Oh, this is harrowing!

Езтн.—

Yea, dearest Uncle, hard Indeed I feel all this will prove, and harder

To go from thee, whom I so dearly love, And who so well hast loved me. Still I mind me This is not all; there is another aspect This matters wears and sets my thoughts at strife, As on my vision bursts a star so radiant, Its brilliance lightens up the o'ercasting shadow Of present grief, and fills me with a hope Undreamed before; who knows? I may be Queen.

MORD.-

Thou gueen! My child, my Esther may be queen.

ESTH.-

Ay! Wherefore not? Hast thou not often told Thy child that she is lovely. O believe me, When I come nigh this monarch, I shall know How his man's heart captive to take by storm. Fear not, dear Mordecai, thou who, so oft, Hast bid me put my trust in Israel's God, We'll trust Him now! Who knows? His Providence May thus design to exalt our double fortunes!

MORD.

It may be as thou say'st. For oft by ways Undreamed of men, the Providence of God Fulfils its high designs. But thou, my child! Indulge not in thy buoyant soul a hope So sanguine, lest the event should yield thee fruit Alone of disappointment. For full oft, The dazzling visions of our youth but lure The spirit to deceive. Still, at an hour Like this, I would not wholly damp thine ardour, I can but leave thee to the hand of God, And trust it may be well with thee. And now, Beloved let me charge thee, and as thou Hast ever been observant of my wishes, In what I now enjoin be duteous still. Among the strangers unto whom thou goest, Divulge not of thy nation, faith or kindred, But keep it hidden, lodged within thy breast, Unless with time, need come thou should'st reveal it; For ever doth suspicion dog the Jew Like his own shadow, and I would not have thee Among these Gentiles suffer harm. And now Once more, come let me press thee to my heart,

Hegai the eunuch will be here anon,
And thou must get thee ready to go with him.

They embrace. Exit ESTHER.

Enter HEGAI.

HEG .--

Hast thou possessed the damsel with my message?

MORD .-

I have my lord! This instant she hath left me, And gone within to hasten her departure. Prithee, a moment, while I seek the house, Await me here.

He goes within and returns with a bag of money.

Take this, I beg your lordship!

It doth contain a hundred golden daries.

I trust you will show kindness to my darling.

HEG .-

Take back thy gold. I need it not. Nor fear That I shall lack in aught of courtesy; If but for mine own sake, and that the maid May prove the monarch's choice, and hold hereafter My life and fortune in her hands, why prudence Dictates that I in nothing should offend her.

MORD .-

Nay, but I beg that you will keep the money, I then shall rest in comfortable thought, 'That in my darling's interest I have used it.

HEG.-

Be it as thou wilt. But rest thee well assured, That no harsh guardian will she find in me.

Re-enter Esther closely veiled.

Is this the damsel? Prithee lift thy veil

A moment maid, that I may look upon thee.

She lifts her veil.

Ah! Thou hast wondrous beauty. Though no prophet, I dare avouch thou wilt bewitch the king. Nor should I marvel did he crown thee Queen.

Езтн.—

Farewell my dearest uncle, more than father! Hope thou the best!

She again embraces him, then turns to Hegai And now Sir, let us go. Execunt. Scene III.—Before the Court of the Scraglio.

Mordecai walking up and down.

Enter HEGAL.

HEG.-

Good morrow, noble Mordecai!

Mor.--

My lord,

Why dost thou mock me? Wherefore dub me noble?

Heg.—Handing him a parchment.

Behold thy patent of nobility!

Thou art advanced. Henceforth thou hast thy seat In the king's gate.

Mord.—Opens the parchment and reads.

Explain this; I am dazed.

HEG .-

Know then that Esther hath procured this for thee, Of Great Ahasuerus chosen Queen.

MORD,-

Esther made queen! No! 'Tis incredible; Thou triflest with me.

HEG.-

Nay, I trifle not,

As sure as yonder sun's bright chariot burns, And gilds the day with splendour, so 'tis sure The damsel whom thou did'st with grief surrender, Commending to my kindness, at her will Now sways the heart of him who sways the sceptre Of realms that stretch from utmost Ethopia, To farthest Ind, his subject provinces.

MORD.

Then hath Jehovah wrought a miracle! Declare to me how this was brought about.

HEG.—

As far as in me lies, I will acquaint thee.
Thou know'st that, from the first, I had prevision
Of this, the maid's good fortune. Soon, her whole
Deportment and demeanour won upon me
To favour her beyond the other virgins,
So that I did resolve her turn to hasten
For going in before the king. At night,
I did conduct her to his royal chamber,
Arrayed in spotless white and with a wreath

Of fairest flowers her lovely brow adorning. We entered. On his couch the king reclined Buried in thought, and of our entrance seemed In heedless mood; I left her standing there, In all her glorious beauty; while without I took my wonted station at the door; Nor by what artifice or woman's wiles. She wrought upon his heart, can tell thee aught. The hours sped by, and still I kept my guard; When, on a sudden, shrilled the sounding gong, That summoned me into the royal presence. I saw the monarch sitting, and the maid Sat lowly at his feet, with folded arms That rested on his knees, while with her eyes Upturned, she looked with gaze all worshipful, As though he were some god she did adore. "Go fetch me here," he said, "the golden crown, Erewhile that Vashti wore." I went and brought it. And with his kingly hands he planted it Upon her head, and cried "Behold the Oueen." Then with a glistening eye the damsel rose. And sought the nearest mirror, where she stood Proudly surveying her reflected form, Then turned with meekness to her lord and said "I will be worthy of this crown." I heard And saw no more; but from the room withdrew. As in my duty bound. Only to-day She handed me that patent, with command That I would trust it to no other hand. But with mine own deliver.

MORD.— God! I thank thee, I see in this thy wonder-working power. Thy favour is towards thy chosen ones, Thine Israel still. Hast aught beside to tell?

HEG.—

Nothing save this, that rumour in the palace Runs of decree, passed yesterday in council, Of a great festival to be observed In honour of this crowning of the Queen.

MORD .-

Thou hast my thanks for these brave tidings brought me; And rest assured thou shalt be well rewarded; Excuse my longer tarrying, I must hence.

Execute at opposite sides.

Scene IV.—In the King's Gate. Night. A brilliant moon lighting up the Scene, but leaving one side in dense shadow, where Mordecai is seated. Enter Bigthan & Teresh.

Big.—Hast thou consulted with the Lady Vashti?

TER.—I have.

Big.—And is the plot matured?

TER.— It is,

Behold the earnest of our recompense.
To each of us she gives a golden talent,
The pledge of other ten on our succeeding.
To morrow we by stealth must seek her chamber,
There she will bind us with an oath most solemn,
That failing, her we will not compromise,
Nor breathe a whisper of her share or Haman's
In our conspiracy. She will conduct us
To the king's bath-house by a secret passage,
Where we can wait in hiding till he come,
Then when the last attendant hath withdrawn,
We can rush out and slay him with our daggers,
Escaping after by the way we came.

Big.—

'Tis cleverly contrived; it cannot well Miscarry; so we shall be each avenged.

They pass within. Mordecai comes forward.

MORD .---

Why what a devilish, treasonous plot is here! 'Twas well you shadow so concealed my person, The miscreants saw me not. Now will I foil them.

Takes out material for writing. Writes. Tears off. Folds and addresses.

It boots to gets this missive quick conveyed. Would I might meet with Hegai. Hist, I hear Approaching steps. It is the very man.

Enter HEGAI.

Hail friend, well met! I would with utmost speed, That thou shouldst bear this missive to the Queen. 'Tis to the king of imminent concern, And doth all haste require.

Heg.— I will not fail thee, But will go place it in her hands at once.

Exeunt.

Scene V .- The Great Banquetting Hall of the Palace brilliantly illuminated. Two thrones on a high raised dais. Ahasuerus seated in the loftiest of the two wearing his crown and kingly garments. Princes and counsellors occupying lower seats, but somewhat raised above the Stage level. Numerous tables within their reach furnished as for a banquet. The whole of the above forming a semi-circle. Below standing about are Eunuchs, Attendants, Dancers, &c.

AHAS --

And have those miserable slaves confessed?

MEMU.

They have, Great Sovereign.

AHAS.-MEMIL- And to what?

They did

Confederate to kill your majesty.

The murderous hounds. And who were leagued with them?

MEMU.-

There are we baffled, for their lips are dumb, Nor hope held out, nor menace can wring from them That secret which so close concerns your safety. They darkly hint at persons high in station, Who have devised this wicked plot against Your life's most sacred citadel; but plead A solemn oath that binds them to discover No trace of their accomplices.

No matter! AHAS.-Hereafter let strict search be made, and should The traitors stand revealed, they well may tremble: For though they be to our own blood allied, They shall not scape our vengeance. Now, declare What penalty our righteous law inflicts On whose would assassinate the king.

MEMU.—Death by the bowstring.

Go thou instantly, And see it executed and the record In our archives inscribed of this whole matter.

Exit MEMUCAN.

And now for Esther's coronation feast
And high enthronement. Let the trumpets sound,
And some one go and summon forth the Queen.

A sound of trumpets, followed by joyful music of the Orchestra, in the midst of which Esther enters in royal apparel attended by Zarah and Abigail, and five other Maidens, two supporting her train.

Welcome our well-beloved consort! Come Ascend thy throne beside us. We already Have crowned thee with our royal hands, and now Thus publicly declare to all our magnates And subject peoples that they bow before thee, Honour and worship thee as our own self.

ESTHER ascends the Second Throne,

Cry all "Long live the Queen!" and yield her homage!

All kneel except the King and exclaim:

ALL—Long live the Queen! Long live the King!

Long live

The Great Ahasuerus and his Queen!

Ahas-Now rise!

All rise—Ahasuerus addresses a cupbearer.

Brim us the royal cup with wine,

And hither bring that we may pledge the Queen.

The cupbearer fills and presents it kneeling. Sweet consort, thus we pledge thee.

Drinks. Passes the cup to her. She drinks.

Let the wine

Go round. Drink all in honour of the Queen.

All drink. Re-enter MEMUCAN.

The traitors are no more. May all thy foes Perish, Great Sovereign, as these have done.

AHAS—
'Tis well. So be it ever! Now shake off
Remembrance of all evil. Be the day
Given up to dance and song and festival.
And celebrate, with customary rites
Of mirth, the enthronement of our peerless bride.

Music strikes up and the dance begins, during which, the Curtain descends on the First Act.

ACT THE SECOND.

Scene I .- An apartment of the Palace.

HAMAN solus.

I was a fool to join the plot. 'Tis well The slaves were so punctilious to their oath, They cannot break it now. Had they betraved The lady Vashti, I had been betrayed, O it was perilous! I must henceforth Beware the wiles of woman. Had the plot prospered, I had been frustrator of mine own fortune. I dreamt not that I held so high a place In the king's favor. This capricious tyrant, It seems, is mighty pleased with my report Of this late Macedonian embassy, And now he deems no honours too abundant, Wherewith to grace the son of Hammadatha, My star in the ascendant burneth brightly And lights me to the crown of my ambition. The crown? Ay! am I not as good as crowned? Next to the king, 'twas even so he called me; And bade the courtiers hold me so related. Why, then am I the virtual lord of Persia, And he, the king, a puppet in my hands By dexterous policy to turn and twist, And wield his power to work my purposes. The Magian's prophecy was no delusion, When in my youth he cast my horoscope, And wisely presaged I was born to greatness, Told that the stars, conjunctive at my birth, Were heralds of a glorious destiny, And so I walked but warily, the path I trod would prove triumphant. True he warned me, There was one planet boded much of evil, Of deadly peril—were the words—but only In the event of mine own rash proceeding, And bade me, wheresoe'er encountering him, To hold the Jew at distance. Rash? In sooth I need that caution. Yea, I have been rash, This baffled plot too surely testifies; But I have learned a lesson! And for the Jew, Small chance that I, a son of Amalek. Should ever have much dealing with the Jews.

But should they cross my path, or venture ever To thwart my will, I have the power, methinks. To hold them now at distance; such a distance As Death doth interpose 'twixt man and man, Holding men's lives in my hand by the king's pleasure. O happy Haman, favorite of the gods! Now will I forth, and gratify my soul, And drink in adulation; for I know, At every step I take, the sons of men Will yield me homage and cringe down before me.

(Exit.)

Scene II .- The King's Gate. Various persons belonging to the Court, with Mordecai among them, seated on either side.

(Enter from within a Herald.)

HER.-

The Great Lord Haman cometh forth abroad, In the king's gate prepare to do him reverence.

(Enter HAMAN with attendants.)

(All kneel but Mordecai.)

Haman to an attendant— Who is you fellow sitting there unmoved, That offers me this foul discourtesy Nor renders sign of homage?

ATTEN.—

'Tis, my lord,

A Jew named Mordecai ennobled lately Through interest with the queen.

HAM.-

A Jew, thou sayest,

Lies here the peril boded of the mage? (Aside) (Aloud) 'Twere better he had with incautious step Trod on a nest of snakes and stirred their rage, Than thus have angered me with his contempt. I will find means to rid me of the worm, And for this slight avenge me on the Jew.

(HAMAN and his followers pass out of sight.)

Servitor of the court to Mordecai—Art thou besotted or fatigued of life, Upon the cherished favorite of the king To cast this insult?

MORD. -

Insult? when? to whom? What insult?

SERV.—
Wherefore did'st thou not bow down,
As noble Haman passed thee?

MORD .-

I bow down?

Never! I bend the knee to God alone; But to no mortal man, except it be The king, viewing in him God's delegate; The representative of rule and law, And bonds that hold society together; Never to creature else, and least of all, To one who comes of stock of Amalek.

SERV .-

Believe me, Jew, that thou wilt rue this hour
Thou showedst scorn of Haman. He has power
To crush both thee and thine. The king hath set him
Above his trustiest counsellors, charged the princes
To show him honour as they would himself;
Confers with him on all affairs of state;
And there is nothing done about the court,
Save at the word of Haman.

MORD .-

Be it so!

I cannot, may not, will not bend before him; Whate'er the issue, I am nailed to this.

(They pass within. Re-enter Haman.)

HAM.-

The Jew not here. Glad am I of his absence. Henceforth the sight of him will be as wormwood And venom to my spirit. It was he, They tell me, made discovery of the plot, And lodged the charge against the chamberlains, So that I have a double debt I owe him, And without fail will pay it. I have a scheme Is gathering shape and substance in my brain,

Which to maturity when I have wrought Will yield me full discharge of obligation Of intense hate I am under to this Jew. He little dreams what signal vengeance waits him, Nor of the suit I go with to the king.

(Exit.)

Scene III .- The King's Private Apartment,

AHASUERUS discovered seated. Enter HARBONAH.

AHAS.-

What brings thee here unsummoned Harbonah?

HARB.—

May it please the king, his slave comes at command Of the lord Haman who abides without, And craves an audience of your majesty.

AHAS.-

Admit him. He is welcome to our presence.

(Harbonah withdraws. Enter Haman. He kneels.)

Ham.—

Thanks gracious Sovereign for this condescension!

AHAS.—

Rise Haman, our good friend and counsellor, What wouldst thou with us?

(Haman rises)

HAM.—

Sire, I would confer

With thee of that concerns thy crown and kingdom, The welfare of thy subjects and the safety Of this whole Persian realm. I have discovered, Or so to me it seems, a lurking danger, Which, unsuspected, may break forth, in time, And work untold disaster.

Ahas.—

Ah! what is it?

Нам.—

Thou knowest how much the welfare of a kingdom Rests in a general union of all hearts, Of subjects welded and compact together, In one obedience paid the laws, one common Close bond of reverence shown established custom, And one respect and worship duly rendered To the king's person and the gods he honours.

There is a captive nation in these realms,
Scattered throughout your divers provinces,
Brought by the conquering Babylonian, erst,
From subjugated barbarous Palestine,
A people of strange manners, owning laws
Diverse from ours, and who scorn our gods,
Fear not to slight your mandates when they clash
With what these conscience call; Pestiferous!
Whom to stamp out and utterly destroy,
'Twere wise and good, should it so please the king!

AHAS.-

Why, friend! Of this we thought not; apprehended No source of peril here. We did suppose, These foreigners as born and bred in exile, Had grown habituate to their condition, Quiet and loyal and peaceful citizens. But this is like thee, Haman, ever wakeful, A watchdog by the throne while others sleep, And aye devising with that busy brain For our true welfare. What advisest thou?

HAM .-

I do advise, thou pass a royal decree Commanding their destruction, on a day By law appointed; and that this go forth In every province to thy rulers, captains, Officers, subjects, with thy seal affixed.

AHAS.-

Haman, I deem it prudent in a King
To trust the wisdom of proven counsellors,
Be guided by it, rather than the dictates
Of his own heart and mind. So now my heart,
Were that to sway me, would oppose thy purpose,
I hold it under, yielding to thy guidance.
Take thou this thing in hand! Do as thou wilt!
And as the counsel let the act be thine!
Frame the decree and publish it abroad;
See, I entrust thee with my signet ring,
And may this business prove our kingdom's vantage.

HAM:

Believe me Sire, it cannot otherwise.

AHAS.-

I hope not. I scarce like it. Let it be An added proof of how I do esteem thee.

(Exit.)

HAM.-

And such are kings! So we but gain their ear We need but little cunning to worm round them, And shape them to our ends. Thank thee, good tool, So pliant to my hand! Believe me king, I will not fail to make brave use of thee.

(Exit.)

Scene IV.—The Broad Place before the King's Gate.
Mordecal discovered, clothed in sackcloth.

Mord.—

Ah, woe to Israel! dire and dreadful woe
Wrought for us by this murderous decree,
Offspring of bitter spite and base revenge!
My fault, as I surmise; and yet no fault,
For had I bowed before the Amalekite,
I had been false and faithless to my God,
And all my nation's glorious history.
God of my fathers! Thou who through the deep
Did'st guide thy chosen ones, out of this deep
Wherein were are plunged, do Thou deliver us!
We are ruined and we have no help save Thee.

(Enter Hatach.)

Нат.—

How doth such wretched plight as this become The noble Mordecai? You are missed in the king's gate. Your absence hath been noted and report Hath reached the Queen. 'Tis she who sends me hither To make enquiry of thy state.

Mord.— Hast heard not Of this decree pronounced, of late against The Jewish people, fraught with death and doom?

Нат.--

Yea! But an idle rumour as I deemed.

Mord.—

It is no idle rumour. We are sold,
A nation to destruction in a day
Beyond deliverance or redress, to feed
The wicked favourite's unholy pride.
Return I do beseech thee to the Queen,
Tell her from me, that she, that I are doomed
And our whole race and nation to the knife.

Enjoin her by the sacred love she bears me And all her kindred, by the filial duty She owes me as the guardian of her childhood, By all our grand traditions of the Past, And by the God she worships, that she seek The presence of the king and intercede Upon her own and people's sore behalf, That this most monstrous edict be revoked; And bring me speedily her message back.

HAT.—
I will not fail thee. (Exit.)

MORD .-That strange dream I dreamt Three past nights in succession, did it aught Portend of this dark business? Oft in dreams, 'Tis said, are wondrous revelations made Of things to come, crimes that have lain concealed Bared to the sleeper's view, high destinies That do await the fortunate foreshadowed, While all the unfoldings of prophetic promise Came to our nation's seers in trance and dream. Let me recall if memory will give back Some traces of the image which it bore, Though dim, no doubt, to present wakeful mood, Methought I saw a little fountain rise, Which grew to a great water and thereon The noonday sun spread his meridian splendour And it shone glorious. Was this fountain, Esther? The little one reared in my humble dwelling, Whom the great king of nations hath espoused, And with his favor dowered? I saw again A tumult and an uproar, heard a noise Of thunder and of earthquakes and great cries Of lamentation, and from out the flood, Arose two mighty dragons and did fight, And over all a midnight darkness fell. The tumult and the outcry did they bode This ill that hath befallen? And the dragons, Were they this wicked Haman and myself? It may be so; the event will make all plain.

(Re-enter HATACH.)
This prompt return is kind. What saith the Queen?

HAT.

She bids I would remind thee of the law Which dooms to death whoe'er shall seek the king Venturing within the inner court uncalled, Unless the king himself to such an one Reach out the golden sceptre: law from which Not even herself, though Queen, exempted stands. And she dreads coldness of the king towards her, For days have lengthened since she hath been called.

Mord.-

Go back I bid thee; hie thee quickly; tell her From me, whate'er the risk, it must be run, 'Tis Mordecai who loves her that commands it. For should this edict stand, not even she Though in the palace will escape its force; And if she hold her peace, perchance our God Will raise up a deliverance to the Jew, Some other way, but cast her down in wrath, Who knows but He hath brought her to the kingdom, In foresight of such time and task as this?

(Exit HATACH.)

Poor dove she well may flutter. I do tremble Because of her, 'mong these uncircumcised. Yet I do know 'tis by weak instruments, The Mighty One, His wonders brings to pass. And spite of all her woman's weakness, still I know the old Hebrew spirit stirs her breast, Glows in her veins and pulses with her heart, And only let her marshal her resolves, My darling will not shame her ancestry.

(Re-enter HATACH.)

What is thy message now?

HAT.— The Queen is ready
To do the task assigned, and prove if need be
A victim for the people whom she loves.
She bids thee to convoke the Jews together,
To keep a three days fast on her behalf,
With solemn supplication. With her maids
She too will fast and pray, and then go in
To intercede the king, albeit against
The law, and these be her last words to thee,
"Say to him, if I perish, then I perish."

(Execunt.)

Scene V.—An apartment belonging to Esther in the Seraglio. She and two of her maidens Zarah and Abigail, seen habited in sombre robes and kneeling.

ESTHER. (rising from her knees, her maids with her.) Now with the God of Israel rests our cause; His hand must guide me through this perilous pass. Fetch me a mirror girls and let me see If this long vigil hath impared my looks. My beauty is my only weapon now, And should that fail me, we are lost indeed.

(ZARAH presents a hand mirror, Esther looks into it,) Say Zarah look I worn?

ZAR.— Nay gracious lady Thou art all loveliness, and these dusk robes, Like some black setting of a precious pearl, By force of contrast show thy beauty more.

Est.—

Peace, thou sly minion, thou wouldst make me vain; Where learn'dst this flattery? Methinks I seem A trifle paler, thinner than my wont, I must make up for it with glance of eye, Curve of the smiling lip, and delicate mien. I did subdue this king's heart on the night I first encountered him, and what forbids I conquer now, in the like sort again? Abigail hearken.

Аві.--

I attend you Madam!

Est.-

Hast made discovery, as I bade, of aught Among the minions of the court concerning This evil-hearted Haman?

ABI.— 'Tis not much,
Dear lady, they can tell. He doth belong
The race of Amalek, and first rose to favor
By grace of the late Queen; even now, they say,
Conveyance oft of secret messages
Is made between them. Some have even whispered
Suspect of implication in the plot
Which wrought the ruin of the chamberlains.
He, while that Vashti reigned, was charged with mission

Of weighty import to far Macedon, And to the court returned, the issues born Of his ambassage have ingratiated His person with the king, so that he deems No gift too great to be conferred, and yields His royal assent to all that he proposes.

Est.—
But wherefore this decree against the Jews?

Abi.—
They say, he loathes the very name of Jew,
Also that Mordecai hath much enraged him,
Remember too, he is of Amalek.

Est. True, girl, I had almost forgotten that. The Amalekite and Jew were e'er at feud, And now the struggle lies I do perceive Between this favorite's influence and my own. Scarce more unequal that old contest told Of stripling David and the Philistine. A woman little skilled in courtiers' ways, And this bad man a courtier from his youth, And trained to all the crafty strategy, Politic wiles and cunning artifice. Their whole deceptive order know so well. No matter I will measure strength with him. A struggle unto death. I feel at heart A trembling terror of my woman's weakness, But there is that concerns my nation's cause, Uplifts, inspires my soul and makes me brave. I vowed I would be worthy of my crown, When first I wore it; the vow binds me still. Who knows but God, who made me Queen, designs By me to work deliverance for His own? So shall my name be honoured and go down With Miriam, Deborah, Judith and the rest, A name for reverence to the times unborn. But girls the hour draws nigh. Let us go dress; And as the victims whom the heathen slay In sacrifice, with garlands they adorn, We will adorn ourselves, and show this day, A cheerful face, albeit we prove but victims. This enterprise means either death or triumph. (Exeunt, within.)

Scene VI.—The Inner Court of the King's Palace.

AHASUERUS on a raised throne. HAMAN seated beneath.

Ahas.—

My mind misgives me much of that decree You did persuade me to. A haunting trouble Doth day and night disquiet me.

HAM.-

Great king,

Wherefore disturb thyself? Didst thou not leave The affair in charge with me? There let it rest.; For I will so discreetly order it, That only good shall follow.

AHAS.-

Be it so then,

But if in aught the business do miscarry, So that the state or we should suffer harm, 'Tis thou, by loss of grace, must answer for it.

(Enter Esther royally attired, attended by her two handmaids. The king starts up frowning fiercely.)

Ha! what! intrusion, and intruders? Whence And wherefore have ye thus uncalled come hither?

(Esther swooning is caught by her maidens.)

Ye gods! It is the Queen. My frown hath slain her. I knew not it was she.

(He comes down from his throne, touches her neck with his golden sceptre, and receives her in his arms.)

Sweet Esther ope

Thine eyelids, shine upon me with those orbs Of starry lustre! Loved one, 'tis the king, Thy husband.

ESTHER (recovering,)
Oh my much loved lord I gazed
Upon thy majesty, I saw the sun,
'Twas terrible, for thou didst frown, and 'neath
Thy frown I sank, my sun was in eclipse;
Even now the memory of it makes me faint.

AHAS.—

Faint not beloved, hold thee by my heart, Fold thy sweet arms around, and lean upon me! What in this unexpected hour hath brought Mine Esther hither? Seekest thou some boon? Speak, for 'tis thine already, though thou ask Bestowment of the half of all my kingdom.

Est.--

Not that my lord; yet do I crave a boon,
A simple boon and easy to be granted.
I have grown weary, weary of my waiting
For my long absent lord, I came to pray thee
That thou should'st on the morrow visit me.
Come thou and Haman with thee. My own hands
A noble banquet for your entertainment
Have well prepared.

AHAS.-

And is this all thy suit? It shall be to thy wish; Haman take note, To-morrow thou attend me to the Queen, We banquet with her there. And for that other Affair whereof we were in conference, Remember thou the word which I have spoken.

(The Curtain descends on the Second Act.)

ACT THE THIRD.

Scene I.—A Room in the House of Haman. Haman and Zeresh.

Нам.—

I tell thee Zeresh thou art too exacting. I cannot give thee time and riches both; And if I spend my days and hours abroad, And see so little of thy sons and thee, 'Tis not that ye are absent from my heart, Or grown indifferent to me.

Zeb.— Be not wroth!
I did not mean to anger thee. Thou knowest
I e'er have been submissive to your will.

HAM.-

True; and I have surrounded thee with wealth; Thou shouldst be happy. My place is at court, There must I watch each winding of the wave, Of shifting circumstance, and take the tide Lest I be cast aground.

Zer.— I stand rebuked. I know that thou art great, and of thy greatness A share of the reflected glory falls On me; I must not murmur if as well I share the penalty.

The penalty! ay, there Thou speak'st as wifely wisdom should. The hind Who tills the soil, returning from the field, His labours done, may find delights at home, But such delights we great ones must forgo, The exigencies of our state demand it. Yet lack we not fair recompense for all. O Zeresh! Know that I am great indeed; Thy husband, think! stands foremost next the throne; The king himself is pliant to my hand, A tool to work with at my will, and showers Each day upon me fresh increasing honours. Know that still further, I have gained the Queen. E'en as the late deposëd Vashti smiled On fortunate Haman, this new risen orb, Ahasuerus hath exalted, beams Her favouring light upon me. On the morrow, She gives a special banquet to the king And I am there invited, no man else.

ZER.-

No doubt your birth was 'neath a lucky star, May never cloud arise to dull its shining!

Нлм.-

Talk'st thou of cloud? there is a cloud that shadows The light of all my glory. Every draught Of the rich nectar of my splendid state, Even as with eager zest I quaff it down, Becomes envenomed to my soul, and all Because of the proud bearing of one man.

ZEB.—

Who dares presume to wound and vex you thus?

Нам.—

He is a Jew named Mordecai; a man Who, as I pass him, sits in the king's gate Unmoved, while all beside bow down to me, Nor stirs, but with a look of marble scorn, Gazes upon me as a thing of nought. ZER.

Methought you said, the king, with all his power, Was pliant to your hand.

Нам.—

Ay! so he is.

ZER.—

And yet you let a worm like this disturb you; I'll show you how to deal with this same Jew. Go instant, with commandment to your slaves, Bid them erect a frowning gallows high, And then, to-morrow, speak thou to the king He give thee leave to hang thereon the Jew, So shalt thou riddance have of Mordecai, And blythe at heart repair to the Queen's banquet.

HAM.—

Well thought upon, good wife! Why did not this Occur to me? Oh, 'tis a rare device, A merry counsel! Fare thee well. I go To put it into speedy execution.

(Exit.)

Scene II.—The King's Bedchamber. Ahasuerus in an undress robe reclining on his couch. He starts up suddenly.

AHAS.—

I cannot sleep. It is that wretched edict
Poisons my thought and robs me of my slumbers.
It liked me not, when Haman first proposed it,
And save for mine infirmity of will,
I had withheld my sanction. But the man
I do esteem; he hath so truly served me,
I can refuse the faithful creature nothing.

He sounds a silver gong. Enter HARBONAH and another Chamberlain.

Go fetch the latest book of chronicles And read to me, it will beguile the time While I lie wakeful and unresting here.

(HARBONAH goes out and returns with a roll of parchment which he opens. The king reclines again.)

Read at the point whereat the roll hath opened.

HAR. reads-

Now it came to pass about this time that one Mordecai a Jew was advanced, at the instance of the Queen, to do service in the king's gate; and while by night he held attendance there, he overheard the treasonable conversation of Bigthan and Teresh the king's chamberlains, wherein they did conspire to do violence to the sacred person of the king and throw the realm into confusion. Now Mordecai having reported this matter, inquisition was made into the whole business: so that these wicked servants of the king were fain to make confession of their guilt and acknowledging the crime they had designed to work together, due justice, by command of the king, was wrought upon them after the manner of the law, and record made thereof in the king's books.

Now it came to pass after this that the king Ahasuerus did promote Haman the son of Hammadatha—

AHAS.-

Hold! Hath the previous record ended there?

HAR.-

Yea, Sire!

AHAS.-

Art sure thou hast omitted nothing?

Art sure there is no farther mention made
Of Mordecai?

HAR.

No mention, sire!

Ahas.— What, nothing?
Nought writ of grace or recompense to him
Who saved our life?

HAR.-

It is not in the record.

AHAS.-

This is the bane of kingship. At our breasts
We nurse full oft the envenomed snake that stings us,
While the true friends and guardians of the throne
Pine in the wintry shade of cold neglect,
Starveling and hungry, orphaned of reward.
I will devise a remedy for this;
Go, see who waits without!

(Harbonah goes to the door of the Apartment, opens it, looks out and returns.)

HAR.

Haman is there.

AHAS.—

'Tis well. Forthwith admit him to our presence. Enter HAMAN

Haman, thy coming is most opportune. There is a matter of concernment to us. Which hangs on us a heavy weight whereof We would our mind disburden. Thine advice Shall here direct the course of our proceeding.

My counsels, sire, are ever at your service. AHAS.---

There is a man in our dominions. Haman! Whom we delight to honour, but who yet Hath never met with his most just deserving, We long to recompense him at his worth; Declare what shall be done to such an one.

A moment's respite, sire, the while I think,-(Aside.) Delights to honour? He but means myself, This king would overwhelm me with his favours. (Aloud.) The man your majesty delights to honour, Let him be clothed, sire, in your robes of state, And let a crown be set upon his head, And on the king's own charger mounted high, Let him ride forth attended by a train Of noble servitors; and let some prince Loved of the king, holding the bridle-rein, Lead him through all the public throughfares, While in advance, with blare of trumpets, march The heralds and loud proclamation make, That this is he the king delights to honour.

AHAS.

Good, Good! Dear Haman thou art ever wise, Haste thee and do this thing thou hast devised, And see that nothing fail, to Mordecai The Jew, our friend, who sits in the king's gate.

HAMAN, (in a bewildered manner.) The Jew thou said'st, to Mordecai the Jew? AHAS.—

Ay, so, to Mordecai; methinks I spake Distinctly. To this Jew we owe our life. Go do this thing forthwith.

HAM,—

Sire, I obey.

Scene III.—Procession passes in foreground of the stage. The court of the King's Gate shown in the rear. First, trumpeters, with blare of instruments, Then Herald making proclamation, "This is the Man, the king delights to honour." Then Mordecal crowned and in royal apparel, mounted on a milk-white and richly caparisoned charger, led by Haman holding bridle-rein. Lastly, train of servitors.

The music of the Orchestra playing throughout Scene, with the exception of the time occupied by the Herald's proclamation.

Scene IV .- The same as Scene I.

Enter HAMAN.

Ye gods of Amalek, am I made your sport? O wretched, wretched Haman!

(He buries his face in his hands. Enter ZERESH.)

Zer.— AH! my husband!
And drowned in sorrow. Haman, what has happened?

HAM.

Zeresh, I am 'mong men most miserable.
Thou knowest I spake to thee of Mordecai,
The Jew, and of the intense hate I bear him,
And thou did'st bid me rear a gallows high,
And sue the king for leave thereon to hang him.
I went, and while within the ante-chamber
I gave attendance, of his own accord
The king did send to grant me audience,
Bade me advise him, how to show much honor
To one, within his kingdom, whom he loved.
I deemed, he did design it for myself,
And counselled honours of right royal sort;
When lo! he bade me haste and do this thing
To Mordecai the Jew.

ZER.—

To Mordecai?

HAM.—

Oh! 'Tis heart-sickening. I am but returned, An instant, from this scene of showing honor, And joining in the show, and to a man Whom I abhor and that with utter loathing.

ZER.

I am in dread for thee. This Mordecai Is Jew, thou sayest; thou art of Amalek; And Israel aye did ride upon the neck And break the pride of Amalek. Alas! If thou before this Jew already hast Begun to fall, thy fall will be complete; And thou and I, our household, we are lost! Lost! Lost!

(Enter HARBONAH)

HAR.—

My lord, the king has bid me seek you. He doth command that you at once attend him To the Queen's banquet, and the time importunes.

HAM .---

I am ready for his service. Wife, farewell! Ah me! I feel a boding at my heart, I ne'er shall see thee, face to face, again.

(Exeunt.)

Scene V.—Esther's State Apartment, handsomely furnished and adorned with gorgeous hangings. Esther, Ahasuerus and Haman at the banquet. Esther kneeling and in the act of presenting a cup to the king, which he receives at her hand, when she rises.

AHAS.-

O my beloved Queen, my beauteous Esther, Star of my life, dear as my life to me, I do receive this cup at thy sweet hands, And pledge thee in this noble Shiraz wine. Long be thy life, and long thy love to me, Love unto death, and reaching still beyond!

(He drinks, then passes the cup to HAMAN.)

Here Haman drink, and pledge thee to the Queen.

HAM.-

Long life to thee, my Queen! Long life, great king! (He drinks.)

AHAS.-

And now, sweet, tell me wherefore thou hast brought us, With thee this day to banquet? Hast thou suit

To proffer? Tremble not to tell thy wish, For ere thou ask thy whole desire is granted, E'en though thou beg the half of all my kingdom.

(She falls on her knees, and clasps her hands together.)

Est.—

Great king! thou art my husband. See I kneel, Not half thy kingdom, but my life I beg, And the dear lives of kinsmen and of friends. O king! thou art abused; thy confidence Betrayed; thy queen, thine Esther she is sold With all her people to be slain and perish. My king, my husband, hear me while I kneel! Had we been sold for bond slaves, this poor tongue Had murmured no complaint, I had been content To abide my lord's decree. But to be slain! O my loved lord, let us not perish so.

AHAS.

Arise my love; stand on thy feet! (He raises her.)

Declare

Who is the miscreant that hath dared presume To work this villainy?

ESTHER, (pointing to HAMAN)

Behold him there,

Thy foe and mine, this wicked, wicked Haman, (Haman shudders.)

A traitor steeped in triple treachery.
He was prime instigator of the plot
For which the eunuchs suffered. He hath played
Thee false in thine affairs with Macedon.
And now he by insidious arts hath gained
From thee to grant the dread decree that dooms
Thy queen, thine Esther to the knife with all
Her kindred, tribe and nation.

Ahas.— O ye Gods!
Mine indignation chokes me. Let me breathe.

(He goes out at the back of the stage to the palace garden. Esther strikes a gong. Harbonah and Attendants enter.)

HAM.—

Spare me, great queen!

ESTH.— Thou dog of Amalek,

I spare thee? Never!

Ham.— I but beg for life.

Езтн.—

Then beg it of the king, for he may grant it, I dare not, if I would. I should but bring The curse of Saul on my unsheltered head, Whom sparing Agag, Samuel did reject, And cast out from the kingdom.

Ham.— Then am I ruined.

He falls, burying his head on the Queen's couch. The king re-enters.)

AHAS.-

What doth that miscreant on the Queen's own couch, And that before mine eyes? Cover his face!

(They blindfold HAMAN.)

Away with him!

HARBON.—
Sire give me leave to speak.
Know that a gallows, fifty cubits high,
He hath upreared, whereon he hoped for leave
To hang the poble Mordecai who saved

To hang the noble Mordecai who saved Your royal life.

AHAS.—

Go hang him there instead.
Be this just execution instant wrought,
For ere 'tis done, we may not bate our anger.

(Exeunt all. The king as before to the garden. ESTHER and her maids, right hand. Harbonah and Attendants having pinioned Haman, leading him out, left hand.)

(The Curtain descends on the Third Act.)

ACT IV.

Scene—The Garden of the Palace as in Act I.
Scene I.—Except that three thrones are shown in
the place formerly occupied by the couch of
Ahasuerus.—Ahasuerus, Esther, Mordecai,
Memucan, Esdras and Princes, Eunuchs, etc.

Esther, (presenting Mordecal to the King.)

Behold the man who saved your royal life, My kinsman Mordecai and your true friend.

AHAS.-

We are right glad to greet him. Mordecai, It doth weigh on us that we stand indebted To your good office more than speech can utter. We would discharge us of this debt a little, Albeit we ne'er can to the full reward thee.

MORD .-

Sire, I have rendered thee but simple duty; The service is itself its own reward; That thou dost live uninjured, all contents me.

AHAS.-

Nay but thou must not slight our gratitude. Thou dost behold you vacant seat;

(pointing to the third throne.)

'Twas Haman's.

We did exalt him next our royal person, For which he did return us base requital; That seat be thine, we do advance thee to it, And here enjoin upon our subjects liege, Next to the king, that all men honour Mordecai.

MORD.

I am o'erwhelmed. Yet know, Sire, that my study Shall be to yield thee ever faithful service, Guarding the interests of your throne, and scattering The pestilential sycophantic vermin, Whose wont it is to prowl about the courts Of monarch's palaces, cringing and fawning, Poisoning their minds with double-tongued devices, And fattening on a plundered exchequer.

AHAS.-

Effect but half of this you contemplate, We shall be fortuned to possess such helper. Remains there, Esther, aught that thou wouldst urge? Thou art rid of Haman, hast thou suit beside? Езтн.—

Haman is dead, but Haman's edict lives, That dread decree, whereto his fraudful arts Procured your royal consenting.

AHAS.-

What of that?

Esth.—

O my dear lord! I beg for its reversal; And of thy power, as it had never been, Pronounce it null and void. How can I bear The wail and lamentation of my people? Or how endure the slaughter of my kindred?

AHAS,-

Alas! I fear that I am powerless here.

ESTH .-

O say not so. Recall that cruel speech.

AHAS.-

Knowest thou not, that by the laws of Persia, No sentence, statute, ordinance or edict That hath gone forth 'neath the king's hand and seal Can e'er be altered, voided, put aside? It stands for ever, unrepealable, The king himself is bound, nor can undo it. For though this golden rod of empire Be mine to wield, I hold it but in trust, Charged to administer the kingdom's laws, Which bind no less the monarch than his subjects. And if the guardian of the law should pamper His private humours in the law's despite, The whole order of the state were jeopardised, And no man's individual rights secure. Ask what thou wilt beside, beloved Esther, This is beyond me.

Esth.—

Then I do beseech thee,

Loan me, a little space, your royal signet, I'll show you what a woman's wit can do.

AHAS.-

With right good will; take it and do your pleasure!

(He hands her the ring.)

Esth.—
Now, am I Queen indeed. Haste Mordecai
Call in the scribes, I will dictate to them.

(Scribes enter and take their places at two separate tables already placed for them.)

Write with all speed, these words I do command you.

(The Decree.)

The Great King Ahasuerus to all his princes, governors and captains, and to all his subjects throughout his one hundred and seven and twenty provinces which reach from India, even unto Ethiopia, sendeth greeting. Whereas a decree did pass of late and went forth under our royal hand and seal whereby was ordained the destruction of the whole people of the Jews throughout our dominions, and whereas such decree was wrongfully procured of us by the fraudful and guileful artifices of our false and wicked minister Haman, on whom justice hath late been wrought; now seeing that by law we have no power to revoke any edict which hath once gone forth from our royal hand, we do ordain and establish a fresh decree, which by our law shall stand for ever, that when their enemies be gathered together against the Jews for their destruction, they are empowered by us to rise and defend themselves against them; and we do enjoin upon all our rulers, governors, and captains, throughout our divers provinces, on pain of death for disobedience that they do employ all force and power they have and hold at our command, to succour the Jews for their complete deliverance in the day that their foes shall rise against them. Given at our Royal Palace at Shushan, under our Royal hand and seal.

(A copy of the writing is handed up to her to which she affixes the Royal Seal.)

Go multiply the writings and dispatch Without delay, and send out flying posts To bear them winged with wind through all the lands. (Exeunt Scribes.)

What Hebrew is among us?

(ESDRAS the Priest comes forward.)

Esd.— Esdras, the Priest; Ready to serve your bidding.

ESTH.— Do thou take horse
At once to Palestine, and make for Salem;
There seek thou out the prince Zerubabel,
He has been hindered in his progress. Bear him
Our royal cheer and comfort. Bid him go forward.
Tell him a Jewess doth bear sway in Shushan,
And the king's heart is with her, whose swift vengeance
Shall, like the lightning, shoot forth to destroy
And wither up the caitiffs would molest him.

(Exit Esdras.)

What thinkest thou, my king of my device? Have I done well?

Ahas.—
Thou hast done right royally.
I knew thee wise, but ne'er conjectured aught
Of a like prodigy of wit to this.
O happy monarch, owning such a consort!
And now methinks of this auspicious day,
'Twere well the good remainder to devote
To mirth and jollity. We do proclaim
A festival. Go, call the dancers in;
Summon the mimes and mummers; load the boards
With pines and pomegranates and luscious figs,
And bring great clusters of the purple grape,
And flagons of choice Shiraz, and be merry.

Esth.—
I had forgotten king, to give you back
Your royal signet.

Ahas.— Oh, 'tis in good hands!

Esth.—
Say, shall I pass it on to Mordecai?

Ahas.— E'en as you will. Езтн.—

(handing it to Mordecai)
Be thou custodian then!

Ahas.— Now let the music sound, the dance begin.

(The Dancers enter and the servants begin to prepare the festival.)

MEM.

A moment, Sire, sure this is all a jest; Methinks 'twas not so very long ago, Your majesty, at my advice did pass Decree that men should have predominance, But woman governs here, and that to most Effectual purpose.

Ahas.— Hold thy peace, Memucan! Would'st make thy king, thy butt? Well have thy jest, Thou sly old fox, on such a day as this, We will not, may not be offended at thee. But seest thou not that she was born to govern? Heaven hath imbued her with a queenly soul. Would she might reign for ever! as her name, Along the echoing corridors of Time, Shall ring for evermore, Esther, the Queen!

(Music sounds, the Dancers join in a festive dance, and the Curtain gradually descends on a scene of General Festivity.)

1800.

Mymns and Sacred Lyrics.*

PROEM.

FATHER of all, whose wondrous power
Doth Time, and change, and things control,
Rule Thou each impulse of my soul,
And keep me near Thee every hour.

Saviour of men, whose love alone Secures us from undying loss, Nail all my being to Thy Cross That I may love Thee on Thy throne.

Spirit of Life, Thine influence give
To permeate each deed and thought,
That God's own will with mine inwrought
His quenchless life in me may live.

I.

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST.

GLORY, glory to God in the highest!
Angels in chorus joyfully cry;
Glory, glory to God in the highest!
Trembling and weak our voices reply:
Fain would we echo their anthem above,
Fain would we sing to the Fountain of love,
Glory to God in the highest!
What though but feebly our accents arise,
Deigning to hearken, He bends from the skies;
Glory to God in the highest!

Glory, glory to God in the highest!
Bright beaming stars of midnight proclaim;
Glory, glory to God in the highest!

All nature peals forth in praise to His name. Warbles the woodland and whispers the breeze,

^{*}The Author's Hymns and Sacred Lyrics in MSS, amount in number to 460. Only a few of these could possibly be included in this Collection. Readers who may wish to make further acquaintance with the Author as a Hymnodist are referred to his volume Lays of Laud, Life and Litany.

Roar out the torrents and tempest-toss'd seas, Glory to God in the highest! Loudly Creation still ceaseless prolongs Praise to her Maker in all her glad songs— Glory to God in the highest!

Glory, glory to God in the highest!
Joining the choir our tribute we bring;
Glory, glory to God in the highest!
Mortals, break silence, gratefully sing;
Reigning in Majesty, thronëd above,
Yours' is the royallest gift of His love—
Glory to God in the highest!
Spread through creation, His grandeur we trace.
Only in man He revealeth His grace—
Glory to God in the highest!

1872.

II.

GOD IS IN HIS TEMPLE.

God is in His temple,
The Almighty Father!
Round His footstool let us gather:—
Him with adoration
Serve, the Lord most holy,
Who hath mercy on the lowly.
Let us raise
Hymns of praise

Hymns of praise
For his great salvation:—
God is in his temple!

Christ comes to His temple:
We, His word receiving,
Are made happy in believing.
Lo! from sin delivered!
He hath turned our sadness,
Our deep gloom to light and gladness!
Let us raise
Hymns of praise
For our bonds are severed:—
Christ comes to his temple!

Come, and claim thy temple,
Gracious Holy Spirit!

In our hearts Thy home inherit:—
Make in us Thy dwelling,
Thy high work fulfilling,
Into ours Thy will instilling,
Till we raise
Hymns of praise,
Beyond mortal telling,
In the eternal temple.

1872.

III.

LIGHT IN DARKNESS.

How little do we know of Thee, Thou great and glorious Power, Proclaimed by every shining star, And every fragrant flower.

Creation's works, on every hand, Thy wonders wide display; But what Thou art to human hearts, They have no voice to say.

They speak of ceaseless might and skill, Of sure unerring law, Of sovereign wisdom, sovereign will, And fill our breasts with awe.

But over all dense shadows spread, To hide Thee from our sight; Pavilioning, in mystery, Thy too exceeding light.

We yearn a Father's hand to trace And feel his footsteps near, To look upon a Father's face, His kindly voice to hear.

But when, in some sweet trustful mood, Upon Thy love we think, Thy storms howl forth, Thy plagues destroy, And our frail spirits shrink. Are these, we ask, the signs of love?

Do these, in God disclose

The Father in whose kindliness

Our faith would fain repose?

Oh! for some gleam, direct from Him, To quell our anxious fears, And hush the wild perplexing doubts, That anguish us to tears.

'Tis given! It shines, the clouds dissolve, The shadows melt away, And God, in Christ, makes manifest Love's all-illuming ray.

1877.

IV.

THE REST OF FAITH.

Mrb shadows dim in Thee I trust,
By faith I rest upon Thy Word,
Victorious o'er the doubts that thrust
Between my spirit and her Lord;
The end is surely drawing on,
When earth's dark mysteries shall be clear,
And things, now veiled in twilight dun,
In open daylight shall appear.

Enough for me that what is still
Enfolded from the eye of sense,
Is ordered by the sovereign will
Of blessed Love's Omnipotence:
The love that opens or conceals
Its purposes is love the same,
And while that love my spirit feels,
She knows how gracious is its aim.

A purer mind, an ampler light,
A freer life, a larger field,—
With these we shall discern, aright,
The things that here are unrevealed,
And know, why unrevealed they now
Remain to shade our onward way,
And bless the love that taught us how
To trust and wait the fuller day.

1879.

V.

THE PRAYER OF SUBMISSION.

O Gop of love! e'er let me, hiding Beneath the shadow of thy wings, In meek and humble faith abiding, Accept the changes each day brings, With thankful heart, whate'er they be, Knowing they must be good for me.

If the sweet light upon me shining
Be shrouded by dark clouds of grief,
O, may no feeling of repining
Cloud the soul's sunshine of belief!
But let me bow to Thy wise will,

But let me bow to Thy wise will, And trust my Father's kindness still.

'Tis not for me to choose and fashion

'Tis not for me to choose and fashion
The course my pilgrim path should take:
Misled by ignorance and passion,
I only should my way mistake;
And, wandering down the smoother road,
Should never reach Thy blest abode.

I leave it Lord, with Thee to guide me,
E'en as to Thee it seemeth best,
Afflict me, scourge, rebuke and chide me,
So that Thou bring me to Thy rest!
The portion that seems right to Thee,
I know can be but good for me.

1868.

VI.

PRAISE YE THE LORD.

PSALM CXlviii.

Praise ye the Lord, His power and glory telling!
Praise Him from the Heavens, praise Him in the height;
Praise Him ye His angels, ye hosts around Him dwelling;
Praise Him sun and moon, and all ye stars of light!

Praise Him, O Heavens of Heavens! and floods that are above them!

Let all His creatures give praises to the Lord! He it was that formed them, and nothing e'er shall move them.

Establishëd for ever by the voice of His Word.

Praise Him from the earth! give praise ye dark abysses, Dragons of the deep, and monsters of the sea, Fire, hail and snow, and aëry wildernesses Swept by tumultuous winds fulfilling His decree!

Lift up your heads, in praise, to Him ye lofty mountains;
Ye hills adorned with verdure and pleasant woodlands
crowned:

Ye fruitful trees o'erhanging sweet streams and warbling fountains:

And ye wide-waving cedars spread His circling praises round!

Praise Him, ye beasts that roam the field and all cattle; Insects and reptiles, and birds on soaring wing; Kings of the earth, and princes strong in battle, And judges of the people to Him your praises bring!

Praise Him, with glad voices, young men and maidens Aged sires and matrons, and children all blend In universal song of grand and swelling cadence, The excellence and worth of His name to extend.

High be His glory, the earth and Heaven excelling,
By Israel His chosen and all His saints adored,
Whom He hath honoured and made with them His
dwelling,

A people ever near Him: O Praise ye the Lord! 1870.

VII.

GIVE GLORY TO GOD.

PSALM XXIX.

Give glory to God! O ye mighty adore Him;
Ascribe to His name the power and the praise;
In the beauty of holiness kneeling before Him,
Your voices, in worship and thanksgiving, raise!

The voice of the Lord o'er the waters is pealing,
His terrible thunders proclaiming His might:
Of that grandeur, a token to mortals revealing,
Wherein He sits clothed in His dwelling in Light.

The voice of the Lord the strong cedar-trees breaketh,
That wave on proud Lebanon's snow-mantled peaks;
The rock-rooted mountains are moved when He speaketh,
And forth, from the darkness, the lightning-flash breaks.

By the voice of the Lord is the wilderness shaken,
The desert of Kadesh doth tremble with dread,
By travail untimely the hinds are o'ertaken,
And the leaves from the trees of the forest are shred.

In His temple, His glory proclaim with glad voices;
He sitteth as King on the throne of the flood;
The Strength of His People, their hearts He rejoices,
And blesses them ever with peace and with good.
1870.

VIII. "THY KINGDOM COME."

O son of God, enthroned in Heaven!
O'er all the ages Monarch crowned:
By Whose inherent power were riven
Death's icy folds, that held Thee bound,
That Morn, when from the Grave's dark prison,
The seraph tongue proclaimed Thee risen.

Ascended far above all height,
That human thought can reach, the sway
Of Heaven and Earth is Thine; Thy might
The issues of all Time obey,
And the swift-gliding years fulfil
Thy hest, the vassals of Thy will.

And yet, Thy re-creative Truth,
Like lightning, thro' the world hath run,
Nor hath she, phœnix-like, her youth
Renewed, nor 'neath the stedfast sun
Hath ceased the wail, the woe, the wrong,
Which cry to Thee, "Great Lord! How long?"

Thine is the heart intense with love,
That brought Thee to our outcast race,
Brought Thee, from undreamed joys above,
To share our sorrow and disgrace,
And link Thy lot with ours, that we
Might share Thy life, Thy bliss with Thee.

O Lord, of boundless love and power, In one eternal rule combined, Delay no more the destined Hour Which brings, to weary human-kind, Thy heavenly-radiant kingdom in, Triumphant o'er Hate, Guile and Sin!

1890.

IX.

TO THE DIVINE SPIRIT.

Spirit of Holiness descending
At Pentecost on men below;—
Through years and cycles, never ending,
Long as the stream of Time shall flow,
Urging the Gospel on its course
With vital energy and force.

By Thee the soul is new-created,
The inmost fount of Life made pure;
The heart, diseased and desolated
By sin, from Thee receives its cure;
And where guilt held its wretched throne,
Love reigns rejoicing o'er its own.

What hinders now that,—every nation Quickened by Thee to second birth,—Christ's spiritual New-Creation Should bring back Paradise to earth, And men to Love and Life restored, Reflect the beauty of the Lord?

What hinders? 'Tis that they, who claiming
To have received new life from Thee,
Their birthright and high calling shaming,
Have broken faith and fealty;
And grieving Thee, have quenched Thy rays
By their unholy works and ways.

O come! Consume by Thy bright burning Th' unfaith, untruth, pride, greed of gold; With Pentecostal flame returning, Purge out the sin within the fold; Thy Church convert! then shall we see

Fulfilled the World's high Destiny.

X.

PRAISE.

Let all the wondrous works of God Combine to show their Maker's praise; The wind-swept flower that decks the sod, The noonday sun's bright burning rays, Green forests, mountains bleak and bare, And living things that wing the air;

Pastures and meads in beauty clad,
And cattle on a thousand hills;
Luxuriant orchards, vineyards glad,
Wide-flowing streams and tinkling rills;
Still lakes, and torrents' foaming roar,
And wild waves breaking on the shore.

The varied tokens of His skill,
They all obey His high control,
He formed them by His Wisdom's will,
And joined in one harmonious whole;
Minute or vast, and mean or grand,
They bear the impress of His hand.

Great Source of light and life and power, Author of universal form, On Him His creatures every hour Depending, from the meanest worm Up to the mightiest seraph, share His ceaseless goodness, bounteous care.

Oh! then, let all creation raise
To Him whose might o'er all extends,
The anthem of adoring praise;
While Man intelligently lends
His glowing voice to swell the choir,
And laud the Universal Sire.

1872.

XI.

SECRET PRAYER.

THE throne of grace is ever nigh, And thither God Himself invites; Bending in mercy from on high,

To hear our prayers His soul delights;
And here to man, on earth, 'tis given
To commune with the King of Heaven.

From the great world withdrawn afar,
I seek the solitude of prayer;
May no disturbing influence bar,
No busy thought, no anxious care
Divide me, now, from Him who sees
The secret suppliant on his knees.

Away, ye dreams of sense and Time!
Away, ye thoughts of earthly things!
Mount up, my soul, yon height sublime,
Aspiring as on eagle's wings,
And pass within the veil, and fall
Prostrate before the Lord of all!

His sacred presence girds thee round,
His listening ear thy suit attends,
Ready to catch the faintest sound,
While unto thee His hand extends,
Where thou art bowed before His face,
The royal sceptre of His grace.

Unburden all thy thought and tell
Each yearning want, each meek desire,
The grief that rends thy heart, the fell
Transgressions thou dost mourn, nor tire
Till, mercy sought and sin confest,
He answers and thou risest blest.

1870.

XII.

PRAYER FOR THE SPIRIT.

Sweet Spirit, come, and make Thy home,
Within this yearning heart of mine!
Oh fill my breast, beloved guest,
And there erect Thine hallowed shrine,
That I may taste, and feel, and see
The life, peace, hope which spring from Thee.
Sweet Spirit, come!

Whisper the word that softly speaks
Of sins in Jesus done away,
Which Satan's binding fetters breaks,
And floods the soul with beams of day,
Dispersing all the shades of night,
'That veiled her sense of heavenly light,
Sweet Spirit, come!

Create my will anew, and free
From Evil's false and tempting lure;
O, cleanse my mind, and let it be,
Like Christ's, in wish and purpose pure,
And stir me with the ardent love,
That constant clings to things above!
Sweet Spirit, come!

Oh, lift my thoughts from Earth to Heaven,
That, with the prospect, in my view,
Of glory promised to be given,
I may with steadfast steps pursue
My onward journey, till I rise
To dwell in endless Paradise!
Sweet Spirit, come!

1868.

XIII.

ENCOURAGEMENT.

O bowed and weary in the strife,
Lift up your eyes above;
There is no cloud o'ershadowing life,
But shrines the light of love;
Lift up your eyes and you shall see,
Breaking the darkness through,
A Saviour's glance of sympathy
Beaming that light on you.

What tho' midst trials manifold,
On earth your pathway lies,
His saints through tribulation hold
Their journey to the skies,
And every wounding briar and thorn
That lacerates them here,
When on them dawns Heaven's lustrous morn,
Will make its joys more dear.

All things together work for good
To them that love the Lord,
And firm in every age hath stood
That pledge of His sure word;
Lift up your eyes on high and trust
Your Saviour's kindness still,
Your sorrows spring not of the dust
But born of His high will.

His will that in the furnace proves
And purifies the soul,
Chastens and scourges whom He loves,
Sets bleeding to make whole;
O chafe not at your sufferings, bear
The pain and sorrows given
On earth, a brief while, to prepare
And school your souls for Heaven.

1875.

XIV.

THE GLORY OF GOD.

How great, O Lord! Thy glories are,
And all the works which Thou hast wrought,
On Earth around, in Heaven afar,
Display the wonders of Thy thought;
The mighty fabric Thou hast planned
Declares Thy praise on every hand.

The varied landscape spreading wide,
Whose beauties charm the gazing eye;
The ocean's vast and wandering tide;
The countless orbs that gem the sky;
And hill and valley, rock and tree
A myriad tokens yield of Thee.

The loveliness of summer flowers,
The wintry winds that wildly rave,
The tempest-cloud that darkly lowers,
The leaping river's flashing wave;
And smiling day and gloomy night
Witness to Thy creative might.

Nor less the changes, hourly wrought,
That weave of life the subtile thread,
The pleasant things with gladness fraught,
The pains and sorrows which we dread,
Proclaim Thy Providential sway,
As they Thy counsels all obey.

But 'tis not in Thy works, O Lord!
Thy glory at its height is shown;
The matchless volume of Thy Word
Makes still a mightier marvel known,
As there, adoringly, we trace
The wonder of Redeeming Grace.

1870.

XV.

THE TRIAL OF FAITH.

I. PETER i., 7.

When all things around us are prosperous and fair,
And we tread the smooth path of unbroken success,
When we meet no delays in God's answers to prayer,
And nothing is wanting to comfort and bless;
When o'er no bereavement or trouble we grieve,
And the days as they pass, bring us all that we would,
'Tis easy that word of the Lord to believe,
That all things are working together for good.

But when the sad burden of anguish and woe,
With heaviness, weighs on the worn weary heart;
When the joys we have prized, we are called to forego;
When in death snatched away, our beloved ones depart;
In adversity, sickness, bereavement, and pain,
'Mid the wreck of our hopes and our fortunes, how hard
The murmur to stifle, the doubt to restrain,
And trust in our God's still unchanging regard!

And trust in our God's still unchanging regard!

But, with heart to the will of his Father resigned,
Let the Christian remember that nought can betide,
Which is not in love for his trial designed,
E'en as gold in the flame of the furnace is tried;
How precious that trial! it purges away
From the soul earth's base mixture of dross and alloy,
While it serves the strong power of grace to display,
As it yields us a more than compensating joy.

O merciful Father! whatever the shape,

The varied events which Thou sendest may wear,

We would not Thine ordeal of trouble escape,

But bow to Thy will and confide in Thy care; For we know, in the midst of all mysteries here.

That the trial of faith in the end of the days,

When Christ on His throne shall in judgment appear,
Will be found unto honour, and glory, and praise!
1870.

XVI.

BE VALIANT AND FIRM.

BE valiant and firm! though thy spirit assailing, O Christian! the Powers of Darkness be nigh;

For thou, o'er their strength and their cunning prevailing, Shalt conquer them all, through thy Saviour on high.

His word He hath pledged to sustain and uphold thee,

To lend thee His grace in all conflicts below; From thy foes with His powerful arm to enfold thee,

And bring thee in safety through danger and woe.

Be valight and firm! they shalt meet no temptation

Be valiant and firm! thou shalt meet no temptation,

That hath not been suffered and vanquished before,
By those who have passed through the world's tribulation,

And stand crowned as victors on Heaven's bright shore;

They trusted in Christ as their Help and Defender, And He did not fail them, nor will He fail thee,

All strength that thou needest He surely will render, And faithful and true thou shalt find Him to be.

Be valiant and firm! have no dread of the contest; How canst thou, when Jesus is found at thy side?

Though weak in thyself, every aid that thou wantest,
Almighty to succour, His love will provide;

Ere long shall the fierce strife of battle be ended.

The scene of earth's tumults and struggles be past, And thou to thy home with thy Saviour ascended,

Shalt rest and reign with Him triumphant at last.

XVII.

AS ROLLS THE SWIFT RIVER.

As rolls the swift river to meet the wide ocean,
As flies the frayed dove to her sheltering tree;
So, stirred by the impulse of Heaven-born emotion,
My soul with desire runs forth to meet Thee.

As at noon, when the sun on the waters is gleaming, Warm vapours exhaling arise from the sea; So the warmth of Thy love, on my heart kindly beaming, Wins grateful affection, my Saviour, from me.

As soft falls the dew on the meadow and mountain, So gently Thy grace hath descended on me; As leaps into light the aspiring fountain, So gush forth the springs of my being to Thee.

Yet faintly the fast-flying bird and swift river,
The fountain upleaping, the mist from the sea,
That love image forth, which, both now and for ever,
I bear in my bosom, O Saviour, for Thee.

XVIII.

ON THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.*

On the voyage of life as we sail o'er the tide, With our port in the distance but dimly descried; When the clouds gather o'er us and tempests assail, And our frail hearts within us are ready to fail; Amid grief and affliction, temptation and fear, We can but be safe, if the Saviour be near, For He, who the winds and the billows controls, Will put forth His power to succour our souls. What though for a while, when we look for His aid,

The deliverance we long for seems strangely delayed, As of old, when the storm o'er Gennesaret swept And alarmed the disciples, the Master still slept. It is but to try us, and urge us to Prayer, He never will leave us to sink in despair; Ere long He will prove how he cares for our lot, And that He who keeps Israel slumbereth not.†

If Jesus our Saviour and Friend we can call,
No storm need disquiet, no peril appal;
No fear then of anchoring one day in port,
No fear that our souls of His rest will come short;
E'en the last storm of Death, that so many hath wreckt,
Will find Him still mighty to save and protect,
And, borne o'er the waves, we shall land on that shore,
Where no tempest can rise to endanger us more.

^{*} Matthew viii., 23-27.

XIX.

OH! WHAT, WHEN THE HEART WITH SORE ANGUISH IS TORN.

On! what, when the heart with sore anguish is torn,
And all human comforters fail;
When the wreck of bright hopes, fondly cherished, we mourn,
To solace its pangs, will avail?

'Tis Faith, holy Faith! that looks up to her God, Through all clouds that hang darkly above,

And trusts, while she smarts 'neath His chastening rod, That He only afflicts her in love.

And what, when our wonted supplies are withdrawn,
And the winds of adversity howl;
When the stormy day follows the gay-smiling dawn,
Can hush the wild fears of the soul?
Tis Faith, trusting Faith! that the promise receives,—
There shall nothing of good be denied;—
And meekly the word of her Father believes,
That He for her wants will provide.

And what, when the summons shall call us away
From all we have loved here beneath,
And the spirit must quit her frail dwelling of clay,
Can vanquish the terrors of Death?
Tis Faith, living Faith! that, beyond the dark tomb,
Looks on to the Land of the Blest,
And rises triumphant to enter her home,
And be with the Saviour at rest.
1870.

XX.

GRANT ME THY SMILE.

Grant me Thy smile, that smile shall bless my lot; Whoever else may frown, 'twill matter not;
In Thy sweet smile my soul will rest content.

For while Thy smile is on me, I shall be Too glad of heart, Lord, others' frowns to see, Though all the world upon my harm were bent.

But shouldst Thou frown beneath that look of Thine, What woe, though all the world should smile, were mine, My heart, without Thy love, with anguish rent. Unloved by Thee, the world no joy can wake;
Blest with Thy love, no world my peace can break;
Smile only Thou, my soul will rest content.

1868.

XXI.

TO A BEREAVED ONE.

An! what though the stroke of Bereavement hath blighted
The flower that sprang up to gladden thy way,
Though Death hath relentless the hearts disunited,
That, so happy in love, to each other were plighted,
And quenched the sweet sunshine that brightened thy day.

That flower, transplanted, now bloometh for ever,
In beauty in happier regions above,
And the dear one, from whom thou art here called to sever,
Thou soon shalt rejoin in an Eden, where never
The dread cloud of parting will sadden thy love.

O cease then, poor mourner, thy hard fate upbraiding,
And cherish the hope which thy Saviour hath given;
Though the cloud o'er thy path for a season hangs shading,
Look on to the joys of the Future unfading,

And the blissful re-union that waits thee in Heaven!

XXII.

THE ASCENSION.

ASCEND, Great Prince of Life!
Go, and possess Thy throne:
Triumphant issuing from the strife,
Receive Thine own.
Amid the loud acclaim
Of Heaven's exultant hosts,
Who spread the glories of Thy Name,
Through all her coasts.

They gather all their bands,
To welcome Thee their Lord;
And bear Thee upward in their hands
To Thy reward.—

"Lift up your heads," they cry,
"Ye gates of pearl and gold:
And ye, bright portals of the sky,
Your doors unfold!

Unfold, and give Him room,
Who comes to reign within;
The Champion who hath saved from doom,
From Death and sin,
Our co-heirs by the foe,
Spoiled of their birthright long;
But he hath laid the spoiler low,
Redressed the wrong!"

From empyrean height
To height, with angel-strength,
They scale, with Thee, yon stairs of light,
And gain at length
The glorious summit, where,
Set in the highest place,
Thee to Thy new bright throne they bear,
The throne of grace.

Reign ever, on that throne,
By Earth and Heaven adored!
Our Brother, whom we wondering own
Our God and Lord!
Reign o'er the worlds, and reign
Within these hearts of ours,
And sweetly to Thy will constrain
Our ransomed powers!

1870.

XXIII.

THE CHIEF GOOD.

On seek not thy bliss in the garden of pleasure,
For poison is lurking in all its gay flowers,
And meant to betray thee the sweet lulling measure,
The siren tunes forth in its garlanded bowers;
Oh, trust not the sound of that music enchanting,
Nor be lured by the beauties that dazzle thy sight,
For all that is there will but leave thy heart wanting,
Disappointed and emptied of real delight.

Oh, climb not the dangerous summit of glory,
To win for thyself an illustrious name;
Though flattered in soug, and applauded in story,
Yet vain are the joys of the darlings of fame.
The incense of praise that around thee arises,
A breeze of detraction, with envious breath,
May scatter; while Honour's most permanent prizes

The pleased hand of pride must relinquish at death.

Oh, let not thy heart set its love upon treasure!

The riches of earth are but cankering dross;

Though they fall to thy share without number or measure,

They cannot compensate Eternity's loss;

Though the luxury and splendour of earth they procure thee,

Yet true peace of heart is what gold never buys,

And what is their worth, if they cannot secure thee

The favour of God and a home in the skies?

Oh, seek in thy God the true rest of thy spirit!
On Him let thy hope and affection be stayed,
And filled with His love, thou a joy shalt inherit,
A glory and treasure that never can fade.
Thy life upon earth shall be crowned with His blessing,
His grace to support thee in death shall be given,
And then, of thy hope the fulfilment possessing,
Thy bliss shall be evermore perfect in heaven!

L'ENVOI.

The brook that, from its mountain source,
Makes glad the vale below,
Leaps onward with impetuous force,
And broadens in its flow,
Till, grown a river winding clear,
Its waters wide and free,
Resistless in their strong career,
Roll down to meet the sea.

So, Jesus, may the sacred peace,
Which Thou to me hast given,
Within my heart each day increase,
Till perfected in Heaven;
Bearing me onward, like a stream
Upon its widening breast,
To dwell 'neath Thine Eternal Beam,
In Thine Eternal Rest!

Extracts from Anfinished Pieces.

I.

THE SONG OF THE SUN-WORSHIPPERS:

FROM AYOUB-A LYRICAL DRAMA.

To the Day-God bright, whose banner of light
Streams o'er the world as the hours roll round;
Ere he seeks his tent 'neath yon cloudy rent,
Of the choral hymn let us wake the sound.
While we drink to the praise of his burning rays,
And stir the sweet echoes the hills among;
For the ruby wine drew its soul divine.
From his beams that shone where the clusters hung.

Soon as he peers, o'er the lifted tiers
Of the mountain ranges, the stars grow dim
And shrink back in their places with close-veiled faces,
For they know that they cannot rival him,
While a sudden mirth comes over the earth,
Her headlands, crags, and glittering isles;
And river and sea are set dancing with glee,
And disport themselves in his golden smiles.

At the glance of his eyes, with sweet surprise
The roses blush in the blossoming vales,
And tenderly bloom with a warm perfume,
That they shed abroad on the vagrant gales.
While beneath his beam, the cornfields gleam,
With breeze-swept billows of ripening grain,
And the orchards glow with the fruits that grow,
To swell the pomp of his monarch-reign.

When he looks from the skies as the tempest dies,
And the rains are subsiding, the radiant form
Of the rainbow-arch, on his glorious march
Proclaims him victor o'er the storm;
And in bush and brake the birds awake
A sudden passionate tumult of song;
And the spider spreads her silken threads;
And the dragon-flies flutter the pools among.

He kindles sweet pains in the lover's veins
And warms to sighs the maiden's breast;
For his radiant beams are the source whence streams
The power that stirs love's wild unrest;
And youth and maid, as they roam the glade,
And their tender thoughts, till his light grows dim,
To each other tell, are under the spell
Of a magical influence flowing from him.

But see where he drops 'neath the far hill-tops
And streaks with amber and purple and gold
The gloomy shrouds of the gathered clouds,
In the threatening West for a storm unrolled.
The winds increase, our mirth must cease;
Ere we go, be one last tribute given,
As we drink to the praise of his parting rays
And hail him the image of God in Heaven.

1863.

H.

THE PATRIARCH'S HYMN.

FROM AYOUB-A LYRICAL DRAMA.

ALMIGHTY God! the Everlasting One, Who reigning high on Heaven's immortal throne, Mid beams of quenchless day thy bright pavilion Hast ever made; whose will all worlds obey, Whose majesty and power thy works display, Or when the eye of morn peeps thro' vermilion Rich draperies of cloud and smiles On Ocean with her thousand isles, And Earth with her aspiring mountains And fruitful vales and laughing fountains; Or when Night spreads her shadows o'er One half the world from shore to shore; Upon whose errands thro' the vast Of space thine angels speed with winged haste; Who hast made all creation to declare Thy Glory; Deign, O deign to hear our humble

prayer!

Thou when of old Thy mighty voice gave birth To this our green and flower-enamelled earth,

And peopled her with myriad living creatures, And richly garnished her to be the home Of man, thy last most perfect work, to whom

Thou gavest to reflect in all his features

The likeness of Thy purity,
Thou, with Divine complacency
Beholding all things, did'st declare
Them good and beautiful and fair;
Thine azure skies shine calm as ever,
Forest and field, and rock and river
Still wear their pure and native dress,
by the soul of man its loveliness

Only the soul of man its loveliness
Hath lost—Alas! by stains of sin defiled
And from its early home in Paradise exiled.

Thou dost transcend the utmost reach of man,
In vain he seeks with curious eye to scan
Thy purposes, amid the darkness feeling
After his God with helpless infant hand,
In vain his struggling mind would understand
Aught of thy ways beyond thine own revealing:

Dark, dark to us thy light intense,
Which bursting on our feeble sense
Would flash swift blindness on the eye,
Thy wisdom, an ascent too high
For laboring human thought to climb
And wrapt in secresy sublime,
Is thine alone, baffling the ken
Of highest seraphim, much more of men;
Not angels know Thee wholly as thou art,
The grandeur which they sing beholding but in part.

All glorious, and All Powerful, and All Wise!
Thou all whose thoughts are perfect harmonies,
And the bright essence of whose unformed Being
With unimagined purity is blended,
Oh! how shall erring man, who has offended
Thy majesty, beneath thine eye all-seeing
Direct his thoughts to Thee? how dare
To lift his voice to God in prayer?

Or deem that at his guilty call
Should any answering blessings fall,
Or beams of love, from thee down-shining
Around his mortal path entwining,
Should token yield of thine attention?
And yet, unfathomed depth of condescension!
A thousand promises invite him near
Thy footstool to implore and pledge thy grace to hear.

To Thee we raise our timorous infant cry, We can but lisp our thoughts as children try In words to tell their wish or their complaining: As yearns the Father's heart towards his child. Tho' we are full of fault and sin-defiled, Pity us, O! our Father, nor disdaining Our prayer Thy tenderness restrain; But soft as falls the summer rain Upon the thirsty glebe, so shed Thy mercy on our souls and spread A covering o'er our sins, and spare To lift Thy hand in wrath, or bare Thy sword for judgement, tho' we merit Alone thy plagues and scourges to inherit; Here at thy feet Thy wrath we deprecate; Regard us, O our God! with looks compassionate.

Upon thine altar the mute victim lies, To thee we bring the ordained sacrifice, With onward-looking Faith thro' Time projected, Adown the vista of the coming years, Where faint and distant a dim light appears, Redemption to our sires and us predicted: Whate'er he be and whose the arm Shall wield the all-potential charm Hell's magic fetters to unbind And free the souls of human kind, We know not—in Thy counsels hid, Nor can we raise the coverlid Of Fate; but to Thy word that giveth Our hope we yield our trust and know He liveth,— Our Great Redeemer liveth,—wherefore spare, Father, Thy guilty ones and deign to hear our Prayer!

III.

THE MERCY OF GOD.

FROM THE PLEASURES OF RELIGION.

Though clouds be dark and tempests brood around, Though fairest hopes betray, and dreams deceive, The mercy of our God is ever sure; Time cannot bound it, nor can earth confine, Nor death destroy, nor the cold grave entomb; But 'twill survive the severance of all ties, When Time and Time's dominion are no more.

The thrones and palaces of earth decay,
The high-imagined works of genius fade,
The bright creations of the artist's thought—
The glory, and the grandeur, and the dream,
Must all be swallowed in the night of years.
The sweetest of affections here have end,
The tenderest links of love are reft in twain,
The loved is severed from the loving one,
And of the heart's emotions the warm tide
Is at the grave's mouth frozen.

Here, I know,

I am a pilgrim in a place of tombs, And all things round me have a voice to tell I do but move amid a fleeting show. Flowers wither, Nature's greenness fades; whate'er Of life or loveliness on earth I view Is passing swift away. I join the throng, I mingle with the busy tribes of men,— With them engage in the concerns of life, And hold communion with my kind; but they, Or loved, despised, or feared, from off the stage Are passing swift away. The solid earth On which I tread,—the mountains and the meads,— The seas and streams,—the azure firmament, With all its vast array of suns and spheres, Have each a death-like whispering voice that they Are passing swift away.

Passing away.

And I am passing, too. A little while,
And the big swelling waves of grief will lie
In this breast hush'd for ever. O'er my head
Long plumes of grass will flutter in the breeze,
While I shall rest unheeding in the grave.

But joy! amid this universal change, One thing ne'er changes: midst the ebb and surge Of Time's wild-rocking billows, like a light It burns, and lamps a dying universe As with the radiance of immortal day, And whispers to my spirit, as I go Down into the dull charnel, of the joy And endless rapture of the bliss to be. It is the loving kindness of my God,— O glorious pledge, sealed with the Saviour's blood! With His dear promise to assure my soul, I will take heart upon my pilgrim way, Inscribing on the battle-flag of life, As the heraldic motto of my trust, "Thy mercy is for ever and for ever, O God! on all that fear Thy Name.'

1861.



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